

ANARCHY a journal of DESIRE ARMED

No.14



INSIDE!

Vagaries of negation—J. Zerzan
Turning the tide—N. Chomsky
The Papalagi
The Badguy Report & more....

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News in Review

Edited by Lev Chernyi



South African mines attack black mineworkers

The mineworkers strike in South Africa continued for three long weeks, despite the firings of tens of thousands of workers and increasingly violent attacks by armed guards and South African police forces aimed at driving more of them back to work.

In South Africa it is legal for mining companies to fire workers for striking (Guess who makes the labor laws in South Africa. Hint: Black mineworkers aren't even allowed to vote.) The mines also employ private armies (euphemistically called "security forces") to intimidate the mineworkers through attacks with tear gas and rubber bullets, among other methods.

As usual, accounts of the strike in the U.S. media have been highly biased against the strikers. Locally the *Columbia Daily Tribune* (notable for its own fair labor history!) has followed this lead with such objective reporting as the following description of a miner's death from the Associated Press:

Johannesburg Consolidated Investments said a strike supporter was killed last night at its Western Areas gold mine in western Transvaal province by "disgruntled workers who had become thoroughly disgusted at attempts to prevent them from working."

Not only was this obviously biased statement by the mining company allowed to stand alone, unchallenged by the striking miner's version of the incident, but it gives the impression that to the Associated Press it must be perfectly natural to kill someone who "attempts to prevent [you] from working," regardless of the circumstances in-

involved (since none are indicated). Other news coverage of the strike has been equally oriented towards portraying the strikers as the "bad guys" in the labor dispute, despite the despicable conditions they are forced to live and work and (for 800 of them last year) die in.

It's too bad we can't arrange to have a few of the privileged western reporters and news managers trade places with some of the black South African miners for a few years. Then you can bet if they were still alive, they'd achieve a sudden understanding of the actual situation faced by the miners! -Lev Chernyi

The politics of recycling

As reported in the last issue of *Anarchy*, Columbia's city bureaucrats and its tree-trimming mayor are less than enthused about the city's current voluntary recycling program. The program has so far, despite minimal outreach and "advertising," attracted over 2,190 participants (in a city of about 60,000 population), yet is being threatened with elimination in the future if it continues to cost the city money.

The short-sighted nature of the politicians' and bureaucrats' cost-accounting is of course obvious to anyone with any sort of ecological consciousness. As Boone County residents learned recently when a new city landfill was created, all the trash from our wasteful industrial society has to go somewhere. And that inevitably means it'll end up in someone's back yard, like it or not.

Although it doesn't deal with

Columbia cops "cutback"

Locally there's a little good news on the personal freedom front. Not that there've been any positive breakthroughs since last years "shirtless picnic." Rather, in the coming year we can expect just a little less interference from those foes of liberty, the city cops.

It seems that their number is being thinned a bit by "budgetary restraints." After years of unopposed increases in police manpower and increasing amounts of city money being thrown down the department's rathole, the cops are going to have to start settling for a little more ground beef and a little less steak.

According to the highly objective and diligently non-self-serving police officers association "Columbia residents will not be safe in their homes next year if the proposed police budget reductions are allowed to pass" (*Columbia Daily Tribune*). However this assessment is not only wrong on two counts, its just plain ludicrous.

In the first place, there is no necessary relationship between the police budget (or even numbers of cops in the streets) and the personal safety of the population. Quite often it has been demonstrated that as laws, cops, courts, and prisons increase in number, the number of "crimes" actually tend to increase. In fact, even in police states (undoubtedly, the ideal of the police officers association), crime of one sort or another usually runs rampant. In reality, other non-police factors have a much higher correlation to levels of crime. Though, it's always hard for cops to accept this fact since it constitutes a severe blow to their fragile egos and their ridiculously idealized self-image.

In the second place, the police budget isn't, in fact, slated to be "reduced." Rather, the budget increase just isn't going to keep up with the increased costs of keeping the current number of cops in uniform and out in the streets protecting the property of the rich and keeping

the more poor and marginal elements of this town in their places.

In fact the department's budget is slated for an increase of \$344,000 next year. Hardly what most people would call a "cutback." The biggest catch, though, is that most of this increase will have to pay for a substantial increase in the police department's insurance rate from \$52,124 to \$323,343. And this is largely the result of the city's out-of-court settlement with the family of Kim Linzie for, reportedly, \$200,000 to \$250,000.

Kim Linzie was an unarmed 19 year old girl who was shot to death in a hail of bullets by a gang of Columbia's "finest" in 1985. It's only now that the department is finally having to pay for that trigger-happy binge. But better the city's money go to Kim's family than to the arming of more legal murderers. It's just a shame that her family didn't get a bigger settlement and the cops a bigger shaft from the city administration. -Lev Chernyi

Addendum: Unfortunately for the citizens of Columbia, the news that our local enforcers were going to be significantly "cut back" was too good to be true. The city council (primarily composed of well-off, if not downright rich, white males) has unsurprisingly decided that keeping their hired guns happy is more important to them than funding the "social service" programs that might marginally benefit some of those among the city's relatively poor population. After all, how many city council members ever need to ride a bus, or eat in a soup kitchen, or live in subsidized housing?

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Anarchy is a somewhat irregular (currently aiming at bimonthly) publication of the Columbia Anarchist League, an anti-profit organization of local anarchists dedicated to catalyzing the creation of a more libertarian world.

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Continued on page 19

Edited by Lev Chernyi

News in Review

The Sad Truth

U.S. Navy shoots down Air Force

The rivalry between branches of the U.S. military has apparently heated up recently, with a U.S. Navy fighter jet pilot shooting down a U.S. Air Force Phantom jet during "exercises" over Greece. The Air Force pilot and co-pilot both ejected safely. But reasons for the downing of the Air Force jet, which occurred on September 22nd, were not explained by the spokesman for the U.S. Armed Forces European Command who announced the incident.

Perhaps the Navypilot was merely nearsighted and mistook the Phantom for a Russian Mig? Surely firing an air-to-air missile under such circumstances could only be an honest error.

Or maybe the incident was provoked. Could the Air Force pilot have fired his afterburners in a tasteless display of snobbish superiority over Navy men? If so, he probably deserved to be shot down.

But whatever the truth of the matter, it surely ended all in good clean fun. And it only cost U.S. taxpayers a few million of their inflated dollars. -Lev Chernyi

Support the rich

We all know that the poor, blacks, gays and other minorities frequently are discriminated against by all the assholes in positions of power. And many people also realize that this discrimination is accompanied by a consistently applied "reverse discrimination" in favor of the rich, whites, heterosexuals and other privileged groups. The saddest part of this phenomenon, though, is that the vast majority of the population is consistently duped by the powers-that-be into a misplaced concern and scapegoating of the very minorities that are discriminated against most, while the rich bastards who line their pockets at our expense all go merrily along their ways with at most an occasional slap on the wrist from the media (and hardly ever any criminal charges, much less convictions).

When the subject of "welfare cheats" comes up, every politician and all the other bigots for miles around fall over each other trying to bleat out "law 'n order" louder than the rest. If a "welfare mother" lies about the number of children she is supporting in order to try to

obtain a little more liveable income, she will usually be assured of receiving the full penalty of the law, plus a little extra harassment and the contempt of all "good-citizens" for her efforts. While the case of a rich and powerful white male almost always ensures preferential treatment, or at worst a saccharine respect for his hurt feelings at being caught and exposed in his crimes.

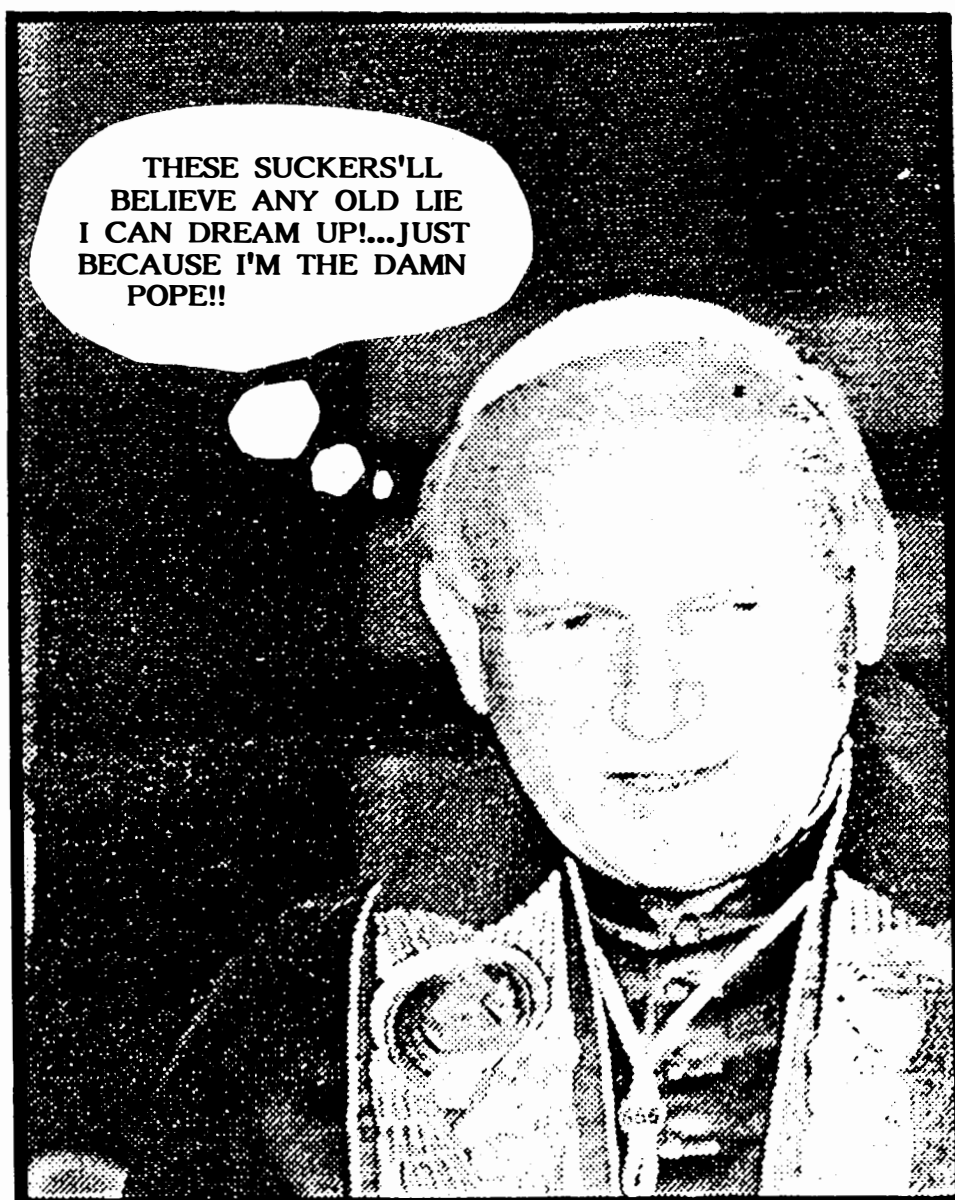
Here in Missouri we recently got to see one of the rare cases when one of the rich and powerful club actually had a few of his crimes publicized. Of course he didn't have to suffer any of the indignities, or punishments any poor black would have had to automatically face, but that's only to be expected as long as his kind are the ones making and enforcing all the rules of the game.

Arthur Mallory, "a pillar of the community," recently resigned as Missouri Commissioner of Education after being caught repeatedly shoplifting liquor from a supermarket. Since the poor man only made \$70,000 a year, though, of course all charges were dropped so he wouldn't have to face an expensive legal battle which someone in his tax bracket could ill afford. Hell, he might even have been forced to sell off a few of his most lucrative stocks and bonds if the supermarket owner hadn't been of an "understanding" sort (i.e. one who "understands" that shoplifting laws are there to put the poor in jail, not to harass the underprivileged rich). That's our system of "justice" at work—keeping the poor poor and making sure the rich damn well stay that way. -Lev Chernyi

Papal insanity

And you thought Ayatollah Khomeini was crazy over there in Iran! What are we to make of a grown man who has the guts to stand up on a stage in front of hundreds of thousands of Americans and claim that he is God's personal representative on earth? Can this man be living on the same earth as we are? Why isn't he in a mental institution with all the other religious loonies? He's the Pope you say? Well then I'm the fucking Madonna.

In a sane world his preposterous charade would be laughed off the streets by all of the 3 or 4 folks who happened to be walking by as he blathered his schizoid ramblings about the Holy Spirit, birth control



and the sacredness of private property. In a sane world you couldn't find a hundred people who would want to stand around and watch this clown drive by--much less a hundred thousand--even if he was as clever with his monologue as Johnny Carson's gagwriters.

Why anyone on this earth can even stomach the thought of believing in this drooling, doddering, shrivelled-up old fool is a question psychologists should be doing intensive research on. Being a Christian is bad enough, but admitting to being a Catholic these days should

by all rights be as shameful as admitting you've just contracted a case of Syphilis from a monkey.

As long as masses of people continue to be gullible enough to swallow such fairy tales as gospel truth, we've got about as much chance of getting out of the world's current mess as the sheep down at the slaughterhouse have of escaping their own deaths. Those with any sanity left who want to show up for Papal visits will come armed with rotten tomatoes and condom water-balloons. -Lev Chernyi

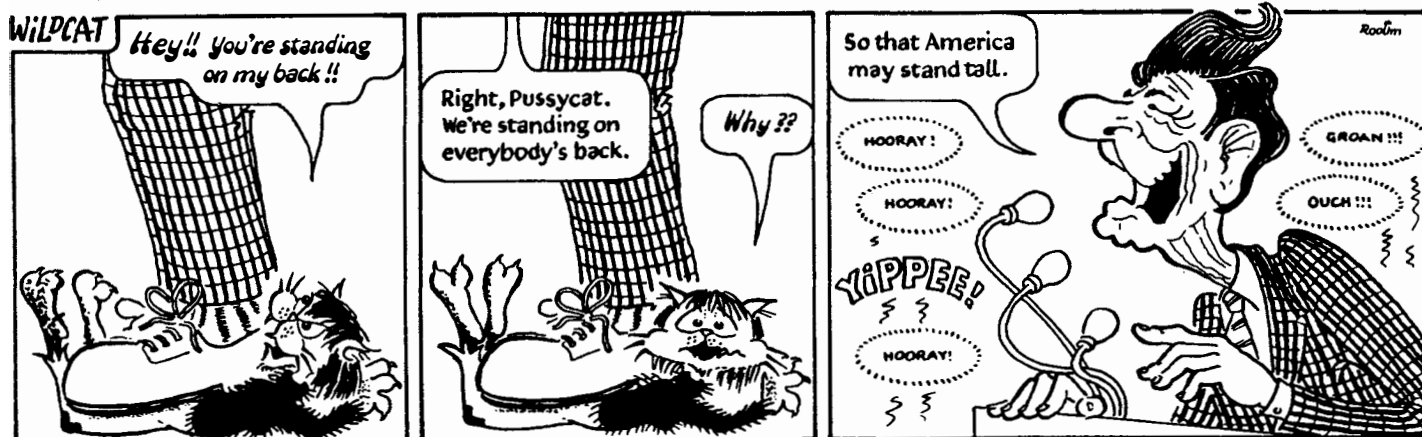
Peace Studies invests in the military

Though University of Missouri officials refuse to admit it directly, funds donated to the university's Peace Studies program have apparently been invested in "defense contractors" ("war contractors" would be more accurate) and in corporations which do business in South Africa, thus supporting the apartheid system there.

Though this could be seen as

an insult to the Peace Studies program, it actually has no direct relation to it. By now it should be obvious to everyone that the university has about as much connection to peace as the KGB and FBI have to justice. One only has to look at the long list of war-related grants, the on-campus ROTC zombies, and the privileged position occupied by military recruiters and militarist speakers on campus to realize where its real commitments and loyalties lie. In a country whose goal is world conquest and domination it would be foolish to expect large institutions like state universities to march out of step with a major source of funding and a major focus of ideological propaganda.

Now that we're well past 1984, it should come as no surprise that an investment in "peace" is actually an investment in war. Just as investments in "freedom" can only continue to enslave us. Those who want to work for peace will have to look elsewhere than to the university.



from WILDCAT COMIX, published by Freedom Press, England

Radical News in Review

Edited by Lev Chernyl

"Legitimate" government?

Joseph Sobran, a nationally syndicated right-wing columnist, recently had one of his columns published under the title, "Half humankind is living with illegitimate government" (*Columbia Daily Tribune*, Sept. 12, 1987). Though as any anarchist could tell you, he's only half right!

Unfortunately, this pinhead columnist (though, in actuality its an insult to Zippy to call Sobran a "pinhead," since Zippy is so much more logical and coherent) is too blind to see the undeniable conclusions that must be drawn from his own arguments. Without fail, Cold Warriors like Sobran (who could more accurately be called "fanatical anti-Communists") insist with unswerving conviction that all Communist governments are by definition "illegitimate," without, of course, ever considering why non-Communist governments should be exempt from the same standards of judgement.

Speaking in particular of Nicaragua, Sobran addresses his criticism towards liberals who, he says, insist that "Communism is a legitimate form of government," though you'd be hard-pressed to find any "liberal" politicians who would defend such a notion. Sobran is concerned that because a few rich white slave-owners and aristocratic intellectuals once signed a document called the Declaration of Independence, that the legitimacy of all governments should be evaluated by how well they emulate its rhetoric. Never mind that those who declared their "independence" from Britain certainly didn't have any intention of also declaring the independence of their women, hired hands or laborers, much less that of any of the other slaves under their power.

The ostensible purpose of government according to the Declaration of Independence may have been "to secure natural rights" as Sobran



President Daniel Ortega of Nicaragua gives a recent speech. What makes the U.S. Government any more legitimate?

says. But the real underlying purpose was to secure larger profits and greater wealth and power for the richest white men in the colonies, a fact which Sobran refuses to mention. (Do you think that might be because he's just another rich fat white man?)

Sobran is patronizingly concerned that the Nicaraguan government has "eliminated" freedom of the press. In fact, he is so concerned that he ignores the undeniable fact that, even with the current press restrictions there, the Nicaraguan press is far freer than it was when the U.S. client government under Somoza was in power. And for that matter, Nicaraguans to this day remain far more free to express seditious views than their counterparts in the U.S. were during World War II (the only remotely comparable situation to Nicaragua's which has occurred recently in the U.S.). And it should be remembered that this is the case in a tiny nation that is not only at

war with an essentially fascist mercenary force, but which is threatened daily with invasion by the most powerful, and most ruthless military machine on the planet.

Sobran is also touchingly concerned that the Nicaraguan government has "eliminated" religious free-

dom. Though, once again, he won't mention the fact that the Catholic church hierarchy (the majority religion in Nicaragua) has all but openly sided with the invading mercenary army. How far would those Americans who wanted to openly practice the Shinto religion in the U.S. have gotten during WWII? I'll give you a hint. Even those Japanese-Americans who were willing to spit on a Shinto shrine were rounded up and put in concentration camps by the "legitimate" U.S. government.

Sobran explains that the reason some U.S. liberals act as though the current Nicaraguan regime is legitimate is that "the animals are being treated kindly. That's what people are under communism: animals." Maybe he's right, but it's hard to tell the difference between here and there. Let Sobran try taking the blinders off his face and the bridle out of his mouth in order to see and tell the truth about the U.S. government for a change, and let's watch how long any establishment newspaper would continue to print his column.

But we don't have to worry about that happening. He'll continue writing with his blinders freely kept in place, and with the bridle willingly in his mouth. He's being fed all the hay he needs. And he's got a dry barn roof over his head. And besides, he's just too stupid to notice where he is, or what he's doing.

Pirate radio closed down

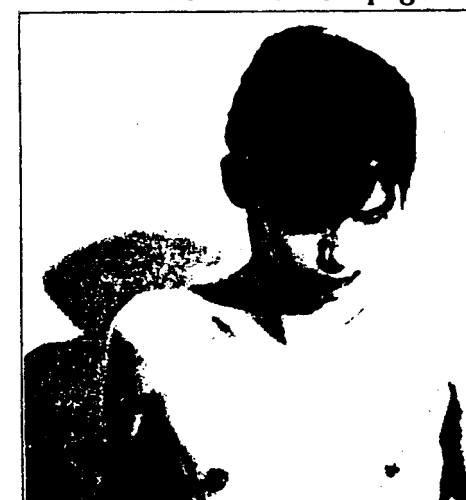
Barcelona's flourishing network of independent local and pirate radio stations has been closed down by the *Generalitat*, the "autonomous" Catalan government in northeastern Spain. This includes *Radio Pica*, the famous anarchist pirate station which has become something of a local institution. A year and a half ago the *Generalitat* announced that all radio stations would have to secure licenses, but that this would only be a formality. Then the *Generalitat* seemingly forgot about the whole business until mid-January of this year when it sent squads of uniformed *Mossos D'Esquadra* (local Catalan police) to all the stations. Inventories of their equipment were made and their premises were sealed off.

Apart from *Radio Pica*, this move has affected dozens of small local stations providing a variety of music and excellent local coverage of news, including Northwest Barcelona's *Radio 10* which used to broadcast anarchist news reports on one of its programs. All of these stations were run by unpaid volunteers. Interestingly, the only unlicensed station to be allowed to return to the airwaves was *Radio Tele-Taxi*, which sells advertising.

The city was covered with graffiti protesting the closures (especially of *Radio Pica*), but the *Generalitat* has said only that it will consider granting licenses to some stations. There is speculation that the shutdown of these stations may be part of the Catalan government's preparations for the 1992 Olympics which are to take place in Barcelona. The only

remaining anarchist pirate station in Spain is Valencia's *Radio Libertaria*.

In February the *Radio Pica* crew
Continued on page 7



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"Don't register to die"

After numerous visits to the local Post Office (in Long Beach, CA.) for various personal business, I noticed that there was a draft registration display and my adrenalin began flowing as I felt compelled to respond. I began by writing "DON'T REGISTER TO DIE." on a blank area of the display. I also undertook lifting the entire pile of registration cards. This action I have repeated since; it only took four or five times before they got the message.

Soon thereafter I entered the Post Office to find my initial messages whited out, certainly a disappointment, as is always the case when a graffiti artist finds her/his messages covered over. However, on further examination, to my delight I found that the actual registration cards had been removed, and in their slot was a sign reading, "Ask clerk for forms."

I proceeded to write over my erased message a simple "NEVER!" and crossed out the "Ask clerk..." instructions, which have yet to be replaced. I finished off this battle with all the Selective Service cards torn in two and an anonymous message to the military placed on the Post Office entrance. This action costs the Selective Slavery Scum financially (without the desired results) and sends an unmistakable message to both the Post Office and the S.S.

Official instructions for postal workers read as follows: "Registration forms,...must be available in each lobby unless experience has proven more security is required. The Display box 45 need not be used where an office has experienced continued vandalism or destruction of the Display Box or forms..." —an anonymous anarchist (Source: *Resistance News*, POB 42488, S.F., CA. 94142)

Edited by Lev Chernyi

International Anarchist News

Berlin anarchists greet Reagan

On the night before President Reagan's visit on June 12th, hundreds of anti-American protesters battled riot police, looted stores, broke windows and erected burning barricades in the streets of West Berlin. According to U.S. media reports more than 1,000 "anarchists," dressed in black woolen hoods, black leather jackets and black boots, broke out of a rally of over 25,000 people and hurled rocks, bottles, and bags of paint at police who were protecting a posh department store on the elegant Kurfuerstendamm Boulevard.

Police with helmets and shields charged into the crowds with clubs and fired tear gas to disperse them.

The fighting flared at the close of a four-hour rally that had been called by some 150 groups. The rally was marked by chants of "U.S. Genocide!" and "Police are dirt!"

Some witnesses reported seeing a few firebombs flung at the cops. Police in turn waded into the rioters and arrested dozens during the fighting. The cops reported a total of 50 arrests in the battle after the rally. There were no immediate official figures of casualties, but witnesses reported seeing three demonstrators and one cop injured. Those numbers were expected to increase as sporadic fighting continued into the night, but we have

been able to obtain no further information.

Witnesses said several stores were looted, including a liquor store and a jewelry shop, and a van and barricade were set ablaze. Some demonstrators dropped "tacklike" devices on the street to puncture the tires of police vehicles.

In Kreuzberg, a poor workingclass district that has been a stronghold of the Berlin anarchist/autonomist movements, barricades were also burning in the streets. Organizers of the demonstrations claimed that 80,000 people took part but "official" estimates ranged from 25,000 to 37,000 participants.

"U.S.A., International Genocide Headquarters," read one banner carried by marchers. "Reagan is a Murderer," read another. "Murderer, Murderer," read a third. Protesters chanted anti-Reagan slogans and carried banners denouncing U.S. intervention in Central America, and the proposed "Star wars" space militarization system.

Reagan's visit, following the rally and street battles, was confined to a part of the city near the Berlin wall (and far from the demonstration) that was defended by 10,000 cops. Normally only 1,500 police are on duty in the whole city. (Source: *San Francisco Chronicle*)



"REAGAN IS A MURDERER!"
-Berlin anarchists

Korean anarchists reorganize

In August of this year the fourth conference of the Korean Federation of Anarchists met at Keimyong University and Anui High School in the southern Korean city of Taegu. Taegu was chosen for the site of the conference because of its association with the True Friend League which was organized there in September 1925.

The True Friend League, the first known anarchist organization in Korea, was an underground group involved in an attempted assassination of the Japanese emperor--Korea was then under the ruthless domination of Japan. The league worked with the Japanese Black Youth League and the Eastern Anarchist Federation of Korean residents of Shanghai, China.

The suppression of the True Friend League was followed by the formation of the Mutual Aid Society, which organized a public cooperative movement on Jeju (Cheju-ko) Island in 1927. Around the same time the Chungjoo Literacy Movement (a workers' literacy movement formed by anarchists) and the Yicheon Free Society were formed. There were also organizations of the Black Friend League formed in Ahnjoo, Chulsan, Dancheon and other regions.

In November 1929 the first conference of the Korean Anarcho-Communist Federation was held in Pyongyang. Its organizers were imprisoned in 1931.

Then with the collapse of Japanese power at the end of World War II, a second conference of Korean anarchists was held at Yongchoosa temple in Kyoungnam province in April 1946. This conference founded the Independent Labor League with

its three principles of autonomy, democracy, and unification (of northern and southern Korea). The Independent Labor League was in turn crushed after the military coup of General Park in 1961.

Ten years later, when the ban on political activities in South Korea was lifted, a third conference was held in Jinkwansa temple in Seoul in June 1972. Some of those attending this conference founded the Democratic Unification League, however this organization was also suppressed.

Fifteen years after the last conference, conditions have finally allowed a fourth conference of Korean anarchists to be organized. The Korean Federation of Anarchists is currently concerned with establishing its own journal, and preparing to hold an international seminar on world peace to be held next year. Its analysis of the current world situation is heavily influenced by the geo-political position of Korea, caught as it is in the center of Cold War politics, and in a process

Anarchy notes

Thanks are due to Freddie Baer for this issue's front cover, the collage on page 27, and also for her help in soliciting the graphic collage on the back cover by Phil Lollar.

My apologies are due to the journal *Our Generation* (Journals Dept, University of Toronto Press, 5201 Dufferin St., Downsview, Ontario, Canada M3H 9Z9) for neglecting, after long hours of layout, to attribute to them the reprint of Murray Bookchin's "Towards a libertarian municipalism" which appeared in the last issue of *Anarchy* (#13).

My apologies also to those who wrote or subscribed recently. I have been having problems receiving and answering mail of late that I hope will be soon resolved. In case you don't realize it, just answering the correspondence to *Anarchy*, keeping the mailing lists up to date, and preparing the mailings seems like a full-time job at times.

If *Anarchy* is to become a more regularly published, and more comprehensive and interesting paper, I will need more consistent participation from a larger number of people than presently contribute. If you'd like to help out, please drop me a note letting me know what your interests and abilities are, and how you'd like to get involved. I'm especially interested in graphic artists, writers (short short stories, accounts of personal experiences involving social and political themes, as well as more "theoretically" oriented essays), typists and proofreaders, and anyone interested in helping with fund-raising or distribution. -Lev Chernyi

of industrialization which is leading it (especially South Korea) to become one of the more economically powerful of the Third World nations. (Source: Report of the Fourth Conference of the Representatives of the Federation of the Anarchists in Korea)



During the recent anarchist gathering in Minneapolis an anarchist pauses to paint a circle-A on a sculpture in the Federal Reserve Bank Building plaza.

I. SETTING THE STAGE

The Greek anarchist movement has a long history. But it is only in the last decade--since the fall of the military dictatorship in 1974--that it has gathered momentum and reached its present level of activity as a small, but relatively vigorous movement. My interest in learning more about the Greek movement resulted primarily from the sporadic reports of militant actions in the international anarchist press, accompanied by little or no background information. I was also interested because of the heavy U.S. connection with the recent history of Greece. I was intrigued enough to investigate more directly, and this article is largely the result of several talks with anarchists in Athens--especially with Basil Karaplis. I have also relied upon correspondence, and general historical essays, as well as news reports from **Black Flag** (BM Hurricane, London WC1N 3XX, England), an anarchist paper which consistently covers the activities of the international movement.

Ancient Greece

As every school-age child is taught, ancient Greece has the distinction of being the "birth-place of democracy." Though of course democracy meant something quite different to 5th century B.C. Athenians--something in many ways more akin to contemporary anarchist visions--than it does to most of us now. Interestingly, though, the rich philosophical and social/political history of ancient Greece seems to have had little influence on the development of anarchist thought in Greece. Despite the obvious affinity of some modern anarchist theorists, most notably Murray Bookchin (some of whose books and essays have been translated into Greek), for the directly participatory social and political forms developed there, contemporary Greek anarchists appear relatively unimpressed. For them, it would appear, their ancient history must seem as laden with ideological and patriotic imagery as the mystified high-school civics version of the American Revolution appears to U.S. anarchists.

Perhaps more directly pertinent to the experiences of the Greek anarchist movement is the long history of Greek oppression and exploitation by other nations, culminating in its current domination by U.S. interests. After the relative freedom of the classical period of independent Greek city-states, began a long series of invasions, conquests and occupations, be-

ginning with the Macedonian conquest in BC 338. Occupied and dominated in turn by the Roman and Byzantine empires, Greece suffered repeated invasions from all sides.

From 1453 to 1821 the Turks ruled Greece. Following the decline of the Ottoman empire, Greece achieved a political semi-independence at the will of the major European powers, with British interests eventually prevailing.

Early history of Greek anarchist activities

The earliest known presence of modern anarchists in Greek history involved the Cretan uprising of 1866, during which a number of Polish anarchists took part in an insurrection against the Turkish rulers of Crete. Some of these Poles were also present during the well-known siege of the monastery of Arkadi in eastern Crete by Turkish forces in 1867. The siege only ended when the abbot "heroically" blew up the monastery in order to kill both attackers and defenders to avoid surrender.

It was in the 1890's, however, that a small Greek anarchist movement actually first came into existence. In 1894 the earliest Greek anarchist newspaper appeared in Patras, a city on the northwest coast of the Peloponnesian peninsula. But within two years, it was suppressed by the state.

Following the appearance of this paper, anarchist ideas spread mainly to Volos, a city near the eastern coast on the Gulf of Pagasai, and to Salonika to the north in Macedonia. In Volos, anarcho-syndicalists organized in the tobacco industry, while in Salonika anarchists were active in two unions of cigarette workers and shoemakers.

However the movement remained small, and was unable to survive through the Balkan wars and World War I due to several factors. These included frequent war mobilizations¹, state repression, and the widespread popularity of the liberal-reformist Greek statesman Eleutherios Venizelos².

And not least, the small anarchist movement was eclipsed by the founding of the Greek Communist Party (the Workers Socialist Party) in 1918, which proceeded to take over the workers' movement based on the prestige of the "successful" workers' revolution in Russia. From its founding up to World War II and its aftermath, the

Workers Socialist Party dominated the "radical" opposition movements. It was its partisan struggle in the Greek anti-fascist resistance, and its defeat in the following civil wars, that set the stage for the modern

Communist, government in Greece.

Thus it was no surprise that after the Nazi's withdrew from Greece first the British, and then the U.S. military moved in. The British installed a brutal

Anarchy in Greece: Part 1



Greek anarchists march in Athens, 1985

rebirth of the anarchist movement in Greece.

The U.S. Connection

At the end of World War II the U.S. found itself in a situation of global economic and military superiority which those in power decided to both maintain and expand. For the U.S. state this meant an immediate strategy of planning for its global dominance in every sphere of action. Not only would the areas controlled by the Axis powers be slated for U.S. control wherever possible, but even the areas controlled by the Allied powers would be fair game for "American" control, especially the remnants of Britain's empire.

At the same time, in Greece, the anti-fascist resistance was the only social or political force with any significant power or widespread support. Because resistance forces were largely Communist, there was no question but that the U.S. and Britain would not do everything in their power to prevent any sort of "democratic" self-determination on the part of the Greek people. Anything less would have likely lead to a leftist, and most likely to an explicitly

and corrupt regime whose immediate goal was to displace the anti-fascist (Communist dominated) resistance. As one of Winston Churchill's most trusted advisers, South African Prime Minister Jan Christiaan Smuts warned in August, 1943, with regard to southern Europe, "with politics let loose among those peoples, we may have a wave of disorder and wholesale Communism set going all over those parts of Europe." However, Britain was unable to control the resistance engendered by its own regime and was soon forced to pull out.

This left Greece to the tender mercies of the U.S. military and the CIA. A "counterinsurgency war" was organized by the U.S., including all the usual trademarks of U.S. involvement--"massacre, torture, expulsion, reeducation camps, and so on." The nominal beneficiaries of this war were "King Paul and Queen Frederika, whose background was in the fascist movements, along with outright Nazi collaborators such as the Minister of Interior of the U.S.-backed regime. The U.S. succeeded in crushing labor unions and the former anti-Nazi resistance based among the

peasantry and working classes and led by Greek Communists, eliminating even mild socialists with blatant interference in the political process, and creating a society in which U.S. corporations and Greek business elites

stitution may not last very long.

For good measure, he added: 'maybe Greece should rethink the value of a parliament which could not take the right decision,...' Greece was 'whacked

A short history of the Greek anarchist movement by Lev Chernyi



Photos from DOKIMI, Athens

prospered while much of the working population was forced to emigrate to survive."³

"Twenty years later, the U.S. supported the first fascist restoration in Europe (also, the first government headed by a CIA agent, Colonel Papadopoulos, who was the liason between the CIA and its Greek counterpart, virtually a subsidiary). This was shortly after President Lyndon Johnson had delivered an important lesson in political science...to the Greek Ambassador. When the Ambassador objected to U.S. plans to partition the Independent Republic of Cypress between Greece and Turkey, saying that 'no Greek parliament could accept such a plan,' Johnson responded,

Fuck your parliament and your constitution. America is an elephant, Cypress is a flea. Greece is a flea. If these two fellows continue itching the elephant, they may just get whacked by the elephant's trunk, whacked good...If your Prime Minister gives me a talk about democracy, parliament and constitution, he, his parliament and his con-

stitution may not last very long. For good measure, he added: 'maybe Greece should rethink the value of a parliament which could not take the right decision,...' Greece was 'whacked

The fall of the dictatorship

During the years following the installation of the essentially fascist military regime in Greece, the anarchist movement re-emerged from obscurity in opposition both to the military junta and to the waning influence of the Greek Communists--now divided into two small parties. Resistance to the military government peaked in 1973, especially among students, and anarchists participated openly and visibly.

On November 18th and 19th of 1973 about 100,000 young people occupied the Polytechnic in Athens, with perhaps as many as 500,000 surrounding the area. Slogans like "Down with the State!" and "Down with capital!" were prominently painted on walls. And the committee of occupation, with about thirty members, included some ten or fifteen anarchists. On the other hand, Communist Youth members refused to take part in the

occupation, considering it a provocation and denouncing the anarchists' participation.

The army was sent in to break up the occupation, and at least twenty people were killed as the tanks and soldiers moved in (the state claimed 17 were killed). But the occupation proved to be a turning point for the military junta, which fell from power soon after on July 24, 1974.

Anarchists tried to take advantage of the momentum achieved with the fall of the dictatorship, and a few anarchist groups were founded shortly thereafter, first in Athens, and then in other cities. There were many demonstrations and short-lived newspapers. Other occupations followed in Athens and Salonika, but mostly there was very much confusion.

However, 1973 was also important for the anarchist movement as the beginning of anarchist publishing in Greece. A publishing house was founded by three anarchists who took part in the Polytechnic occupation, and two books by Bakunin were reprinted, *The Paris Commune* and *The Idea of the State*. The publishing house split in 1974 and Eleftheros Typos (Free Press) and International Library publishing houses were subsequently formed, along with the Black Rose Bookshop. Between the two publishers, over 500 translations of books and pamphlets have been published, though International Library has had no new titles for over 5 years now. Most of the titles have been translations from English, with a few French, German and Italian titles also translated. Surprisingly, only a few books were authored by Greeks.

Meanwhile, the conservative prime minister, Karamanlis, who had originally been overthrown by the fascist-military coup, returned to Greece from his decade-long exile in Paris. He

Pirate radio closed

Continued from page 4

began broadcasting again illegally. However, their broadcasting equipment and record collection was immediately confiscated by the Catalan police. The station was one of the best-known and most popular of those operating in Barcelona, combining anarchist news and discussion programs with music which wasn't aired on the more commercial stations such as Barcelona's answer to *Crass*, *L'Odi Social*. (Source: *Black Flag*, BM Hurricane, London WC1N 3XX, England)

formed a civilian "Government of National Salvation," and in 1974 political parties re-emerged. Most notably, the socialist Andreas Papandreu set up what would become the center party, the Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK). In addition the two (now small) Greek Communist parties were legalized, and other more radical leftist (Maoist and Trotskyist) parties were formed.

In 1975 the workers movement also began to re-emerge, most notably with a strike at a canned-food factory largely organized by Maoists and Trotskyists. However, two of the strikers were anarchists, and an anarchist solidarity group was also formed. And by 1976, facing an increasingly militant workers movement, a march by striking construction workers in Athens was attacked by police. Strikers and supporters fought back by building barricades and throwing molotov cocktails. And Exarchia Square, which had become the center of the anarchist movement in Athens after the fall of the dictatorship, was invaded for the first time by cops using tear gas with many injuries resulting.

This article will conclude in a future issue with a chronology of recent activities and a brief description of the current movement.

NOTES:

1. The stress imposed by these wars was not inconsiderable. For example, when the Greek invasion of Anatolia was defeated by the Turks, there followed an exchange of refugees in which over a million people were transferred to Greece from Asia Minor.
2. For example, Venizelos gained the support of the peasantry when he distributed land to them through the government after they were prevented from occupying the land on their own during the 1906 revolt in Thessaly against the feudal-type system the Greek nationalists had inherited from its earlier Ottoman domination.
3. Noam Chomsky, *Turning the Tide; U.S. Intervention in Central America and the Struggle for Peace*, (South End Press, Boston, 1985) pp. 195-6.
4. Ibid., p.196.

ANARCHY IS ORDER.

GOVERNMENT IS CIVIL WAR.

Anselme Bellegarrique (1848)

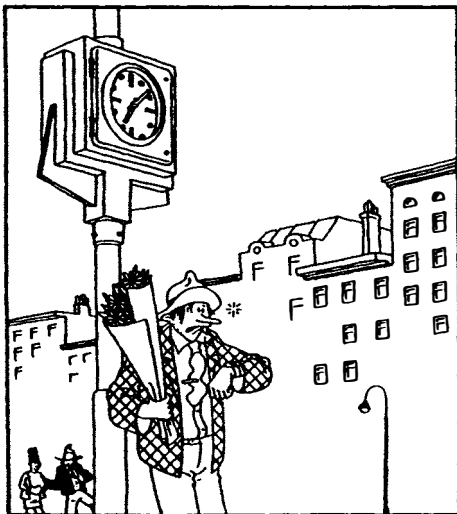
Collected by Erich Scheurmann
Illustrations by Joost Swarte
Translated by Martin Beumer

Editor's note: The *Papalagi* (with the 'g' pronounced as an 'h', or so I was told by the original English publishers, Real Free Press in Amsterdam) is a collection of speeches written by the South Pacific chief Tuiavii of Tiavea, and intended for his people. They first appeared in a German edition sometime in the early twenties, in a translation by his friend Eric Scheurmann. A translation was published in Dutch in 1929, from which the English translation was then made in 1971. As becomes quickly apparent when one reads it, *The Papalagi* is a sort of critical reverse anthropology in which white, European civilization is thoroughly dissected and evaluated with the puzzled contempt that it so well deserves from a "primitive" perspective.

The *Papalagi* adore the round metal and the heavy paper. It gives them much pleasure to put the juices from dead fruit and the meat from pigs, steers and other terrible animals inside their stomachs. But they also have a passion for something that you cannot grasp but still exists, time. They take it very seriously and tell all kinds of foolish things about it. Though there never will be more time between sunrise and sundown, for them this does not suffice.

The *Papalagi* are never satisfied with their time and they blame the Great Spirit for not giving them more of it. Yes, they slander God and his great wisdom by dividing every new day into a complex pattern, by cutting it up into pieces, the way we cut up the inside of a coconut with our machete. Every part has its name. They are called, seconds, minutes or hours. The second is smaller than the minute and the minute is smaller than the hour. But all of them strung together form one hour. To make up one hour, you need sixty minutes and many, very many seconds.

This is an incredibly confusing story, of which I haven't grasped the fine points myself yet, as it is hard for me to ponder this nonsense longer than necessary. But the *Papalagi* attach much weight to it. Men, women and even children too small to walk, wear a small, flat, round machine inside their loincloths, tied to a heavy metal chain hanging around the neck, or around the wrist; a machine that tells them the time. Reading it is not an easy thing. It is taught to the children by pressing the machine to their ears, to awaken their curiosity.



THE PAPALAGI

SPEECHES BY
TUIAVII OF TIAVEA
A SAMOAN CHIEF



THE PAPALAGI HAVE NO TIME

Those machines are so light that you can lift them with two fingers and they carry an engine inside their bellies, just like the big ships you all know. There are also big time-machines, standing inside their huts, or hanging from a high house so as to be better visible. Now when part of the time has passed, it is indicated by two small fingers on the face of the machine and at the same time it cries out and a ghost strikes the iron in her insides. When in a European town, a certain part of the time has passed, a frightening clattering and din breaks out.

When that time noise sounds the *Papalagi* complain: "Terrible, another hour gone!" And then, as a rule, they pull a somber face, like somebody that has to live with a great tragedy. Very puzzling, because immediately after, a new hour starts.

I've never been able to understand that, but I think it must be a disease. Complaints that are common with white people are, time vanishes like smoke, or time is running out and give me just a little more time.

I said it is probably some kind of disease; because when the white man feels like doing something, when for instance, his heart yearns to go walking in the sun or to go sail a boat on the river or to make love to his friend, he usually spoils his own fun by being unable to find it. He will mention a thousand things that take away his time,

grumpy and sputtering, he sticks to a job that he doesn't feel like doing, that brings him no pleasure and into which nobody forced him but himself. And when he suddenly discovers that he does have time or when others give him time--the *Papalagi* often give each other time and no gift is more appreciated than that--then he discovers that he doesn't feel like doing it at that particular time, or that he is too tired from his joyless labor. And he is determined to do those things tomorrow, for which he had no time today.

There are *Papalagi* who say that they never have time. They walk around stunned as if taken over by an *aitu* [evil spirit], and wherever they show up, they work up disasters, because they have lost their time. Being possessed is a terrible disease that no medicine man can cure and a disease that contaminates many others, rendering them deeply unhappy.

Because the *Papalagi* are always scared stiff of losing their time, not only the men, but also the women and even the very small kids; they all know exactly how many times the sun and the moon have risen since the day that they saw the big light for the first time. Yes, it plays such an important role in their lives, that they celebrate it a regular intervals, with flowers and feasts. Very often I noticed that people felt they had to feel ashamed about me, because when

asked for my age I would start laughing and did not know it. But you have to know your own age. Then I would be silent and think, it's better for me not to know.

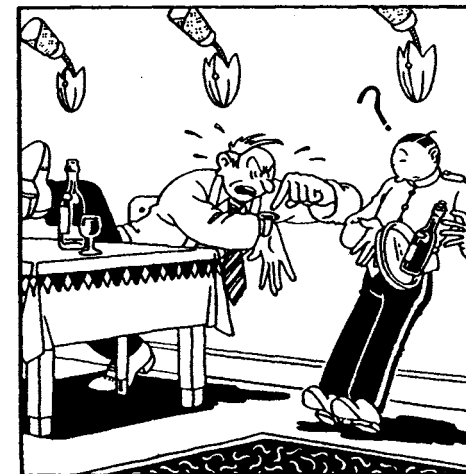
"How old are you?" means, how many moons have you lived? Counting and probing this way is full of dangers, because that way it was discovered how many moons people usually live. Now all those people keep that in mind and when a great many moons have passed they say, "Now I have to die soon!" Then they grow silent and sad and indeed die after a short period.

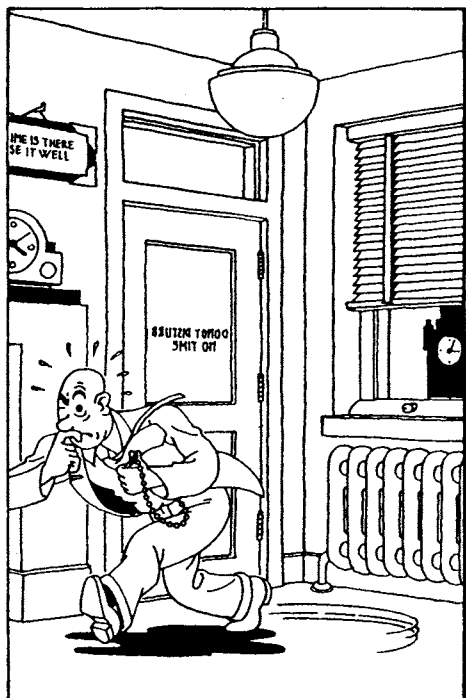
In Europe there are only a few people that have time, really. Perhaps even no one at all. That's why those people run through life like a thrown stone. Almost all of them keep their eyes glued to the ground when they walk and they swing their arms to make better pace. When somebody stops them, they shout angrily, "Why do you stop me, I've no time, better make good use of your own time!" It seems that they think a fast walking man braver than one who walks slowly.

Once I saw a man's head almost explode, saw his eyes roll round and his gullet stretch wide open like a dying fish, becoming red and green in the face and flailing around his hands and feet, just because his servant arrived one breath later than he had promised he would. That breath was supposed to be a considerable loss, that could never be made up again. The servant had to leave the hut, the *Papalagi* chased him away and called him names. "This is the limit, because you have stolen much time from me already. A man who doesn't honor time isn't worth that time!"

Another time I saw a *Papalagi* who had time and never complained about his time, but that man was poor, dirty and despised. People walked around him in a big circle and nobody gave him any attention. I didn't understand that, because his step was slow and steady and his eyes were quiet and friendly. When I asked him how that came about, he hung his head and said sadly, "I've never been able to use my time well, that's why I am a poor and despised clod now." That man had time, but happy he wasn't.

With all their strength and all their thoughts, the *Papalagi* try to make time as fat as they can. They use water and fire, storm and lightning from heaven to hold up time. They put iron wheels under their feet and give wings to their words, just to gain time. And what is all that work and trouble food for? What do the *Papalagi* do with their time? I've never quite found out, though judging from their words and gestures one would think they were personally invited to a big





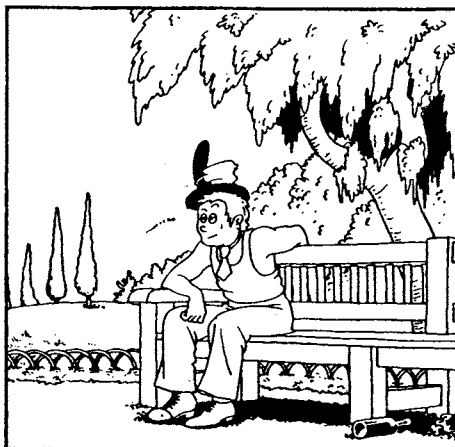
fono [feast] by the Great Spirit himself.

I think time slips from their

grasps like a snake slipping out of a wet hand, only because they always try to hang on to it. He won't let time come to him, but runs after it with his hands outstretched. He doesn't afford himself the time to stretch out in the sun. They always want to keep it within arms reach and devote songs to it and stories. But time is a quiet and peace-loving thing, that loves to rest and lie on its mat undisturbed. The **Papalagi** have not understood time and therefore they mistreat it with their barbarous practices.

Oh my beloved brothers, we never complained about time, we loved it the way it was, never did we run after it or cut it into slices. Never did it give us worry or grief. If there is one amongst you, who has no time; let him speak up! We have time in abundance, we are always satisfied with the time we have. We don't ask for more time than there is and we always have time enough. We know that we will certainly reach our goals in time

and that the Great Spirit will call us when he feels it is our time, even if we don't know the number of moons spent. We must free the duped **Papalagi** from his delusions and give him back the time. Let us take away their small, round time-machines, smash them and tell them that there is more time between sunrise and sunset than an ordinary man could spend.



of selections from **Retort**, an anarchist magazine published by **Holley Cantine** of Bearsville, New York from 1942 to 1951. **Cantine** saw some elements of redemption(?) in the avant garde literature of his time as well as in personal opposition to the state and its adventures. This collection, reprinted by **The Match!** editor **Fred Woodworth**, is a bit quaint, and makes you wonder what it felt like to be an anarchist during World War II.

Maximum Rock n' Roll is appearing once more every month at the **Community Grocery** as well. The letters column continues to be my favorite part of this zine, with discussions of the **here and nows** of social struggle and punk pleasure.

Other titles to be found on the magazine racks of the **Community Grocery** include **Processed World** (an issue on the medicalization of health care), **Fifth Estate**, **Radical History**, **Radical Philosophy**, and **Off Our Backs**. A bunch of other interesting titles will be arriving any day now.

Needless to say some people find some of these works offensive to their values, and some have suggested that the sexually explicit material be banned from sale at the **Community Grocery**. These suggestions have not resulted in another prohibition thus far, as they did in 1984; but never underestimate the capacity of some counterculturalists for moralism and intolerance.

Shantytown Activists celebrated their first anniversary of the building of shanties in October with the largest political rally on the **University of Missouri** campus in several years. It was a nicely orchestrated, old-fashioned, civil rights-type rally with a black choir, and some rousing speakers--no doubt improved by the absence of two politicians who were invited to speak. Meanwhile, companies are circumventing divestiture policies and laws by continuing to market products in South Africa. This allows these firms to continue to profit from and buttress the system of apartheid while telling all the world they no longer operate in South Africa. This is just the type of loophole the curators of the **University of Missouri** will use if they decide to divest of companies doing business in South Africa.

The closing of the **Tiger Hotel** is the end of yet another era in the saga of all-ages gigs, but don't despair. In a two week period recently, Columbia and Jefferson City hosted about ten bands at four separate gigs at four locations. Stay tuned to **Sleepless Frenzy** for details of future gigs.

Best of all, we've been tossing around the idea of doing a punk dance party billed as "**Sleepless Frenzy—Live and Uncensored**" at a local venue. The secret word, kiddos is **resilience!**

Check out the largest
ANARCHIST BOOK
selection
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on consignment
at the Columbia
Community Grocery,
1100 Locust St. at the
corner of Hitt St.
and Locust St.

Is punk dead at KOPN?

Sleepless Frenzy (midnight on Saturdays on **KOPN 89.5FM**) celebrated its sixth anniversary this summer, but **Bert** and I had little to celebrate. The **Federal Communications Commission (FCC)** set new standards for what kind of vulgarity would be allowed on the radio and when. It cited a half-a-dozen or so stations for violations of these standards and asked the Justice Department to prosecute a Pacifica radio station for broadcasting excerpts from the play, **Jerker**, about two male AIDS victims who develop an erotic relationship over the telephone. The **FCC** said that sexually explicit material could only be broadcast if it were not obscene. The Justice Department has since declined to prosecute Pacifica, but in doing so it warned that it might go after other radio stations.

Formerly, sexually explicit depictions that were not obscene, and other songs and spoken word pieces with the words "fuck," "piss," "shit," "cunt," "cocksucker," "tit," and "motherfucker" could be broadcast after 10pm and prior to 6am as long as the audience was advised in advance about the nature of the stuff. In its new ruling the **FCC** said that it could no longer be assumed that children were in bed by 10pm, and that such foul language could only be broadcast at a time when children in a given community could be safely assumed to be absent from the audience.

Only two radio stations that I am aware of have had the courage to challenge the **FCC** by broadcasting material in defiance of these censors. A station in Quincy, Illinois announced that it would continue to broadcast "offensive" songs just as it had in the past. **KRAI**, Pacifica's station on Manhattan Island broadcast its scheduled reading of James Joyce's **Ulysses**, even though the work is filled with naughty words and lusty references.

I am ashamed to report that the **National Federation of Community Broadcasters (NFCB)** and its local member, **KOPN**, did little more than run for cover. At very least, they

should have adopted as organizational policy a guideline that children are not normally awake from midnight to 6am, and then encouraged as alarming programs as possible in that time span. They ought to be sending out packets of information for training disc jockeys in ways of conforming to the letter of the law while pulling out all stops to violate its spirit.

Susan Newstead, **KOPN's** station manager, helped give the **FCC** a *raison d'être* for even more repressive action when she stated in a memo issued in May that it could not be safely assumed that all persons under 18 were ever absent from the audience, and that therefore all adult language would be prohibited.

Meanwhile, everyone knows that the **FCC** would have a hard time claiming that exposing teenagers in Columbia to the seven dirty words--especially those teens up after midnight--was detrimental to them in the least. The vast majority of teenagers in the **KOPN** listening area have heard all these words routinely among their peers. All of the teenagers I know use these words without thinking anything of it. Even a 6-year-old can go to a PG-13 movie and hear vulgarity. Of course, parents have more control over the bedtimes and viewing habits of 6-year-olds than they do of 15-year-olds, and social standards of acceptable fare for each age group differ. But an interpretation of the **FCC** regulations which suggests that nothing which is unsuitable for 6-year-olds can be broadcast at any time **juvenilizes** all programming.

The lack of leadership by the **NFCB** and **KOPN** affirming the free speech prerogatives of its programmers and listeners is, of course, the result of their fear that the least little peep that they make could result in costly litigation which would drive them out of business. But if the mission of community broadcasters includes the willingness to stand up for the right to air provocative and authentic expressions of ideas and feelings

The Badguy Report

excluded from mainstream radio, then I'm afraid my friends that free radio is already out of business.

Meanwhile, punk radio has been dealt a death blow at **KOPN**. **Bert** will try to cope by censoring offending words out of songs by **Cross**, **the Crucifucks**, and **Frightwig**. I can't do this, and will be playing other kinds of subversive sounds on the show. So much for freedom of speech....

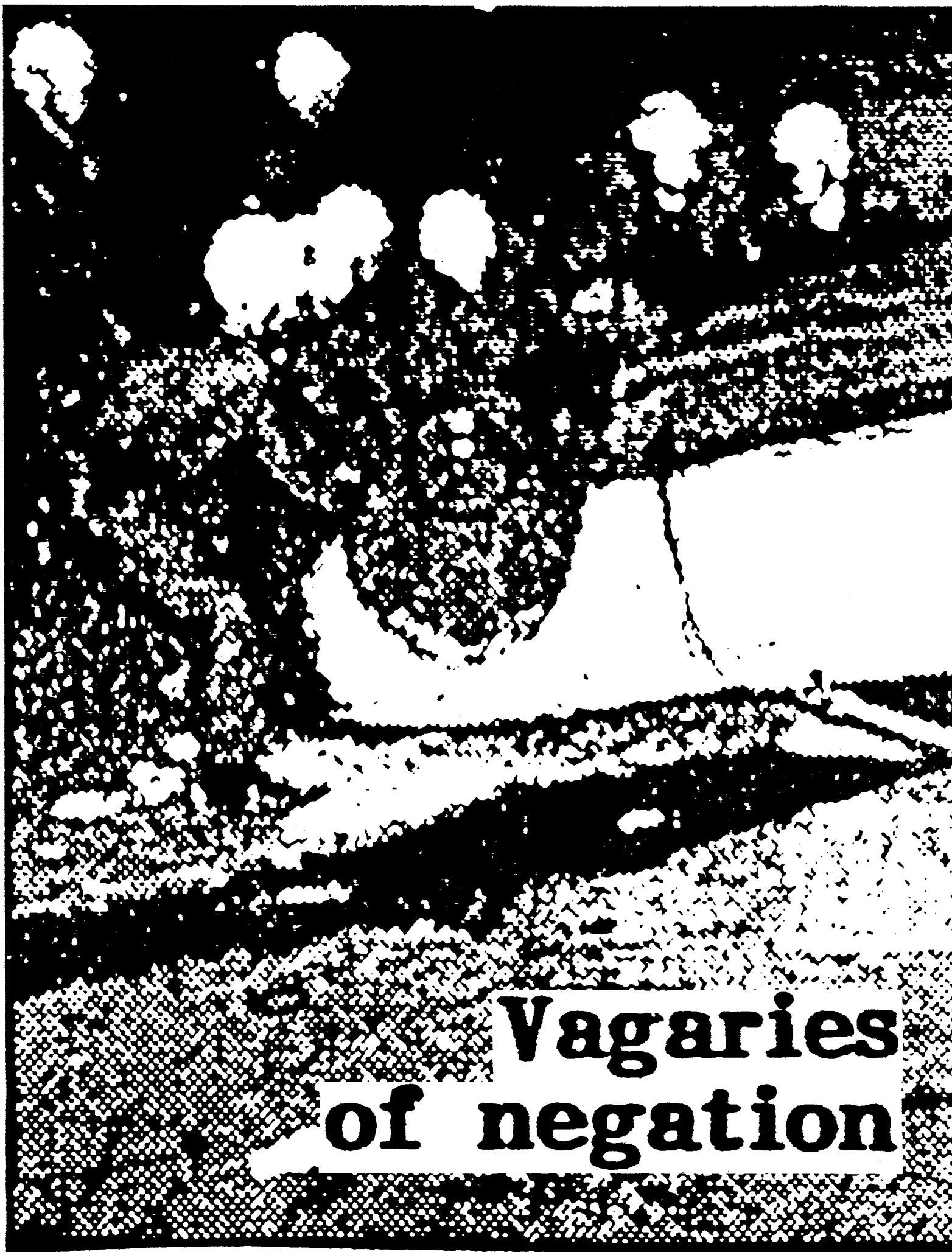
A comic book which was formerly banned at the **Columbia Community Grocery** (1100 Locust Street), **Young Lust #6**, is once again available there. A letter by its editor, **Jay Kinney**, defending the comic book against charges that it was "pornographic" appeared in **Anarchy #7** (back issues of **Anarchy** are available for 50 cents each). Other comic titles available there include: the new **Anarchy Comics #4**, **YOW**, **Zippy Stories**, **Love and Rockets**, **Pudge**, **Binky Brown**, **Mr. Natural**, **The Complete Crumb**, and **Comnies From Mars**.

I've been having lots of fun digging up unusual and provocative zines to sell there including (for \$14.95) the superb volume, **Incredibly Strange Films**, published by **Re/Search**, which makes you appreciate the beauty and wonder of sensationalistic movies which dare to traverse the bounds of good taste. Well-researched and nicely illustrated with display ads and prints from films of all kinds, including a biker movie with **Holly Near**, hilariously exaggerated gore flicks, and other creations, which remind me of so much taboo material dredged up from the subconscious and sold back to the masses. I enjoyed reading this cover to cover and I don't feel the least bit guilty about it!

Another little oddity is a reprint

Introductory note: "Vagaries of negation" represents another in a series of John Zerzan's attempts to make sense of the popular, academic, business and professional literatures that chronicle the progress of modern alienation and the attempts at its palliation. There are inherent drawbacks to his method. These include such problems as the always questionable reliability of the polls, opinions, heresay and statistical studies which make up much of the data he works from. As well, it remains undoubtably true that vastly differing interpretations are always possible even when working from identical data. However, the basic principle involved here--the attempt at monitoring the ubiquitous, but unconscious, unorganized and largely visceral revolt against the modern conditions of survival--also remains important. And John's thoughts regarding the theories which attempt to make sense of this data are, as ever, provocative and interesting. —*Lev Chernyi*

In 1977 and 1978 Paul Piccone unveiled his "artificial negativity" thesis,¹ the most far-reaching and coherent model for understanding contemporary social reality since at least the 60's. Re-periodizing recent phases of capitalist development, it locates the decisive impact of consumerization in the early 60's as a watershed between incomplete and completed repression.² Correcting Marcuse's "one-dimensionality" approach as obsolete, Piccone has offered a persuasive picture of a consumer-cultural hegemony grown so complete as to cloud the horizons of class rule. For its victory over non-domestication has been purportedly full to the point of crippling its subjects, thereby removing them from any combative contact with authority and thus depriving authority of the crucial intelligence function that derives from such now-extinct struggles. Internal opposition is necessary in order to equip the system with vital control mechanisms; with the too-victorious stamping out of the undomesticated, monopoly capitalism now must somehow relax its repressive force so as to help engender a renewed negative presence.



Vagaries of negation

It seems very plausible to me that domination today needs just such "artificial negativity" for its future,³ but one part of the formula I find very questionable. In sum, where Piccone sees a docile, cretinized subject, produced as the over-success of integration, I see evidence of *dis*-integration, a subjectivity that, far from happy and conformist, cries out in anguish as it begins to withdraw from the reproduction of the social order.⁴ The negative is in fact strongly present, if not in a form useful to power. Data and commentary on the social fabric of the 80's may

suggest a clarification and re-interpretation of the Piccone thesis.

One might have expected the alleged arrival of standardized, homogenized consumer consciousness, with its "erosion of the last vestiges of individuality,"⁵ to also mean the evaporation of social turmoil. Of course, precisely the opposite is the case. Psychological immiseration is increasing on all fronts, fundamental testimony that the individual continues to register his incompatibility with the distortion and impoverishment of life as offered by late capitalism.

With the decline of the traditional two-parent family--which is occurring even faster in the 1980's than in the '70's⁶--less emotional mediation is afforded against the onslaught of everyday life. Even the apparently successful are far from immune, as indicated by such articles as "Life of a Yuppie Takes a Psychic Toll" and "Madness Stalks the Corporate Ladder."⁷

In fact, levels of emotional illness are growing, as reported by the National Institute of Mental Health or the supermarket tabloids,⁸ as people find themselves unable to adjust to the triumphant



by
John Zerzan

Photo from the July/August 1987 (No. 14) TOTAL BRAND, Box 150 15, 104 65 Stockholm, Sweden.

culture. Newly prominent maladies, such as the Epstein-Barr virus, a kind of physical and psychological devastation,⁹ compete with new increases of others, like eating disorders.¹⁰ A federal study released in 1984 found that one in five had had some type of mental health treatment, compared to one in eight in 1960.¹¹ Not surprising is the 15% jump in the NIMH [National Institute for Mental Health] research budget for 1987.

Suicide among the young has tripled in the past twenty-five years, following one hundred years of suicide rate stability going

back to the mid-19th century data studied by Durkheim. Among 15 to 19-year olds it is now the second leading cause of death and occasioned formation of a cabinet-level Task Force on Youth Suicide in 1985. Late in 1986 it was reported that after years of decline, suicide rates among the elderly are also rising.¹²

Stress, thought by some to be perhaps only a buzz-word of the late 1970's and early 80's, has never commanded so much attention. The literature is burgeoning as stress-wrought damage grows.¹³ The **Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report** released October

2, 1986 by the national Centers for Disease Control declared that mental stress caused by unsatisfactory working conditions has become America's biggest occupational disease, six months after a news magazine had concluded that "the American workplace is being swamped with claims ranging from job burnout, or mental fatigue from tedium and stress, to chronic and severe anxiety, manic depression, nervous breakdown and schizophrenia."¹⁴ It has also been recently claimed, by Dr. Thomas Robertson, that the stress of getting up in the morning is the reason for the

very high incidence of strokes and heart attacks occurring between 8 and 9 A.M.¹⁵

The unreality of our work-and-shop existence is also viscerally felt, it would seem, by the very young. A 1986 Cornell University Medical College study of randomly selected 6 to 12-year olds in New York City found that 12% of them manifested suicidal tendencies, including overt manifestations,¹⁶ while a 1985 offering discussed widespread child arson.¹⁷

In 1985 the American Medical Association revealed that "total outpatient drug exposure" increased 28% from 1971 to 1982.¹⁸ This by way of background to 1986, the year of the cocaine epidemic and non-stop attention to the problem, with special attention to drugs at work and testing for drug use; several federal institutions came out for universal employee drug tests in March, 1986, for example.¹⁹

Turning more directly to work, it is clear that the "productivity crisis" is another hot topic of the 1970's that has proven its durability. If marxist periodicals like **Science and Society** and **Dollars and Sense** denied its existence in the 70's, falling back in the 80's to assert that at least the subjectivity of workers is no factor in it, those with a responsibility for intelligence in the matter of faltering output-per-hours-worked have had to be more forthright about this crisis that definitely has not gone away.

"Something important has happened to productivity. I don't know what it is...but it is very bad."²⁰ judged E. Dennison in the late 70's. Baumol and McLennan concluded, more recently, that "this country's productivity growth performance in recent years is extremely disquieting."²¹ After lackluster growth in 1984, it fell to -.2% for 1985²² and is giving a poor showing so far in 1986.

Amid recent studies of a declining "work ethic,"²³ reactions range from outrage, blaming "irrationalities on the level of the individual,"²⁴ to sympathy, taking cognizance of the prevailing "national malaise and personal pain."²⁵ And one of the most stunning aspects is that the productivity crisis has not been affected at all by massive recent outlays, organizational and technological. Wickham Skinner summed up the industrial situation thusly: "American manufacturers' near-heroic efforts to regain a competitive edge through productivity improvements have been disappointing. Worse, the results of these efforts have been paradoxical. The harder these companies pursue productivity, the more elusive it becomes."²⁶ Also in mid-1986 came
(Continued on next page)

Vagaries

CONTINUED

the parallel shocking news that the hundreds of billions spent on computerizing the office have not raised white-collar productivity a whit.²⁷ At the same time, performance in the service sector is being questioned,²⁸ there is great resistance to the neo-Taylorist monitoring of work by computers,²⁹ and layoffs signal to some new declines of company loyalty, morale and productivity.³⁰

Meanwhile, since its effective beginnings in the early 80's,³¹ participative management "has spread at an extraordinary rate"³² with the prospect of even greater growth of worker-involvement, quality of worklife, and other democratizing of jobs.³³ More and more it is becoming clear that "workers themselves must be the real source of discipline,"³⁴ that authority has no choice but to give over more initiative to those who are becoming more demonstrably averse to contemporary work. At the same time, there is already evidence that after initial temporary reprieves, power-sharing schemes are not improving productivity or job satisfaction.³⁵

Two other significant work tendencies, in passing, are the increase in part-time employment,³⁶ and the refusal of the young, though often unemployed, to accept work or to last long at it.³⁷ More evidence of disinvestment in the dominant values.

Rousseau argued that republics could outdo monarchies by turning the spectators into the spectacle.³⁸ Today's political spectacle is failing because people are shunning their appointed role. "Americans are no longer merely criticizing their political system," asserted historian James Burns in 1984, "they are deserting it."³⁹ Turnout for the 1986 election fit, if exaggeratedly, the general tendency since 1960: it was the lowest since 1942 despite the most massive and costly voter registration drive ever mounted in a nonpresidential year. Among those still participating in recent years, by the way, the trend has been toward an unaffiliated status, not a swing toward the right.⁴⁰

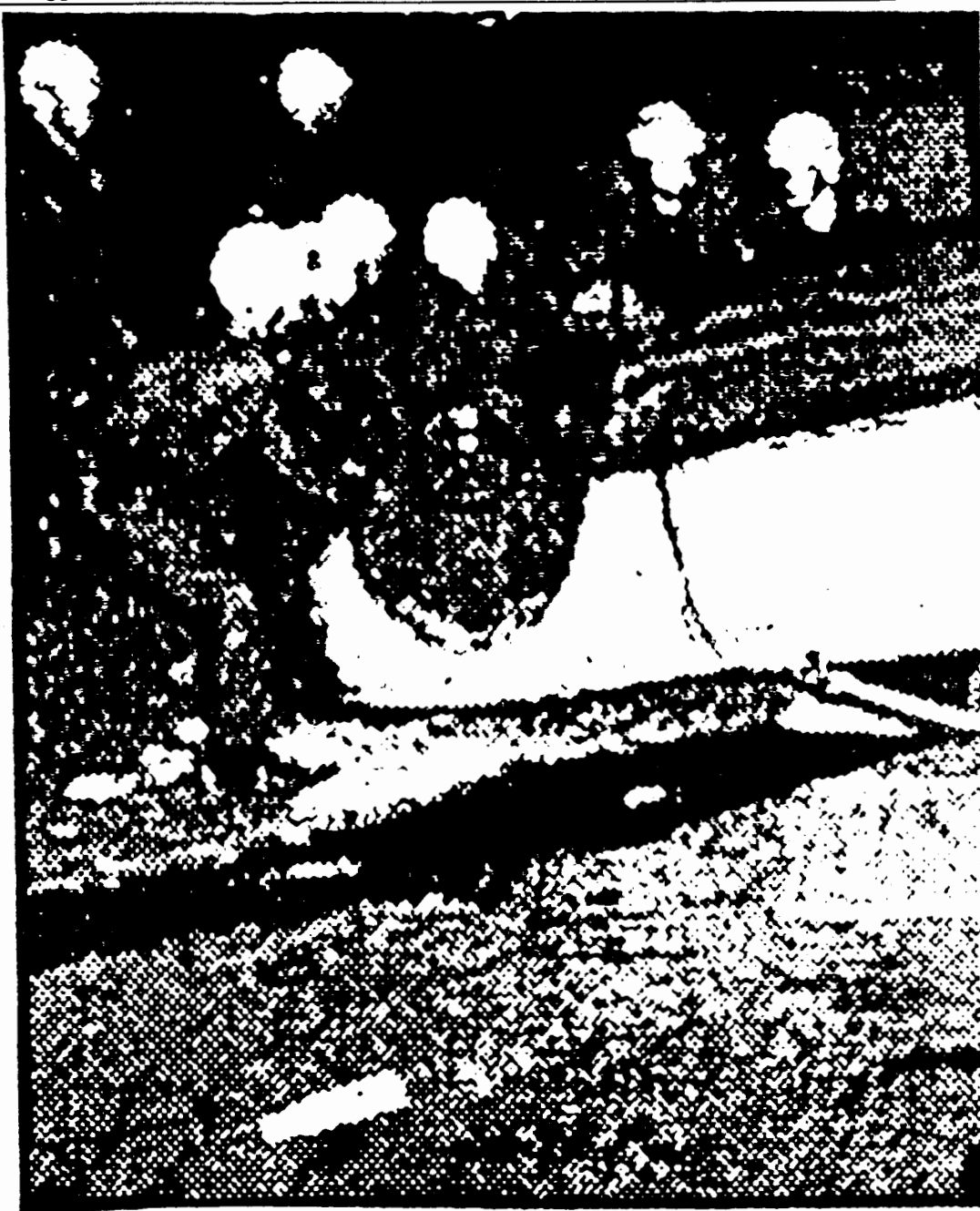
The young Sartre averred that there was nothing he and his compatriots had been told that wasn't a lie. Illiteracy in America is vast and increasing, prompting Jonathan Kozol to estimate that sixty millions are "substantially excluded from the democratic process" by it.⁴¹ There is a deep, visceral turn-off indicated here, deeper than that of non-voting, one which refuses and reverses one of civilization's cardinal agencies and promises fundamental problems for a social order increasingly reliant on self-activation. The Army found that 10%

of its conscripts were functionally illiterate in 1975; in the 1981 (volunteer-based) Army the figure was 31% and climbing.⁴² At work, new computer-mediated environments require both literacy and initiative, as both qualities evaporate.⁴³ A related development is the rising high school dropout rate, with rates of 40 to 50 percent from the central city schools now being reported.⁴⁴

Another basic connection with this culture also seems to be loosening, that of a sense of history, a perspectival interest in the past. Commentators of every stripe have bemoaned a great indifference emerging in this area,⁴⁵ the tendency to live exclusively in the present. Ultimately, however, is this "demonization" so threatening? Are the horrors of the present not a sufficient reference point on which to base the project of emancipation--in fact, are they not the only basis? As Baudrillard reminds us, "Each man is totally there at each moment. Society is also totally there at each moment."⁴⁶ Adorno closed his *Minima Moralia* with the counsel to thought that it must reveal this "indigent and distorted" world as it will one day appear from the vantage point of liberated existence--and to achieve such a perspective "entirely from felt contact"⁴⁷ with the world's aspects; this proviso seems to imply both the definitive weight of the present and the promise that the subject is capable of measuring that present against surviving instincts and sensibilities. This brief survey tries to suggest that the individual does survive and tries to turn away from official living, maintaining particularity and otherness in fundamental ways, in the face of the demands of complicity.

It has become a commonplace to reject or ignore Habermas's early 1970's hypothesis that "late-capitalist societies are endangered by a collapse of legitimation."⁴⁸ But the farther we get from the 60's (perhaps especially with the abortive Reagan counter-revolution now definitively past) the more obvious it is that a full range of de-legitimizing potentialities has been growing since that time. What Robert Wuthnow characterized as an unprecedented "fundamental uncertainty about the institutions of capitalism"⁴⁹ does not even take into account the real depth of "uncertainty" present when emotional survival itself is at issue.

Probably no single datum could provide better ammunition for the "artificial negativity" view of a totally passive, cretinized populace than that of the more than seven hours of television consumed per capita daily. But can there be much dispute that most of those so irradiated are consciously narcotizing them-



"Modern domination is democratic; it must have participation if it is to have legitimacy; if it is, ultimately, to function at all. This is precisely what is being withdrawn, as the return on investing in domination registers on the organism as zero or less."

selves? Drugs of all kinds are clearly necessary simply to get through the day, and an aura of irony has never been so strong regarding TV. Further, one could point, as many did, to the "Happy Days" generation of young men as they faced the institution of pre-draft registration in the early 80's. With all those thousands of TV programs behind them, could there be any doubt that all of them would not docilely register? Their massive non-compliance staggered virtually everyone.

Television commercials also deserve comment. Ten years ago, it was "Harley Davidson--the freedom machine!" and "Mustang II, Boredom Zero;" today--along with much more attention to pain and dyspepsia relief, and alcohol and drug treatment centers--Mastercharge invites us to "Master all the possibilities," Merrill Lynch sings "To know no boundaries," and eroticism becomes far more pervasive in the promotion of a great variety of commodities. Banks, life insurance companies and other conservative components

begin to sound like the motorcycle, whiskey and fast car purveyors of the 70's. The widely noted collapse of the commitment to deferred gratification⁵⁰ is not without grave danger to the present society, as more and more is offered--in terms of what can only be seen as less and less. Consumerized society provides less a guarantee of power's stability than a bill of reckoning that grows ever larger by its noticeable failure to satisfy.

Meanwhile, polls reflect the public belief that ability and hard work count for almost nothing in "getting ahead;" state lotteries and other forms of gambling emerge as the national pastime; virtually universal employee theft promotes the use of millions of lie-detector and psychological "integrity" tests--not to mention drug testing; new studies show the widespread use of unemployment benefits to subsidize leisure rather than work search; shoplifting and tax evasion figures set new highs each year, as do the U.S. prison population numbers; an avalanche of articles



Photo from the July/August 1987 (No. 14) TOTAL BRAND, Box 150 15, 104 65 Stockholm, Sweden.

touts the desperate need for moral education; the Army, reduced to a New Age "Be all that you can be" appeal, contends with drug, AWOL, illiteracy problems, and a new investigation points to "Army-wide" pilfering of all types of equipment--this list and its documentation could be greatly extended; I'll spare the typesetter.

What stands out is that "narcissistic" withdrawal on this scale means that values dangerous to the dominant order are corroding its very foundation. As Baudrillard put it, "Everywhere the masses are encouraged to speak, they are urged to live socially, politically, organizationally...the only genuine problem today is the silence of the masses."⁵¹

Modern domination is democratic; it must have participation if it is to have legitimacy; if it is, ultimately, to function at all. This is precisely what is being withdrawn, as the return on investing in domination registers on the organism as zero or less. This "passivity" is of no instrumental use to the world we must continue to endure; an artificial negativity may well be required. But this negativity in no way means that a real one, growing more visible, does not exist. Nor, it must be added, is it inevitable that a totally alternative consciousness will emerge from the crucible of intensifying alienation.

VAGARIES NOTES

1. Paul Piccone, "The Changing Function of Critical Theory," *New German Critique* 12 (Fall, 1977) and "The Crisis of One-Dimensionality," *Telos* 35 (Spring, 1978).
2. This may be seen as paralleling Jacques Camatte's categories of the informal and actual domination of capital, left rather indeterminate in *The Wandering of Humanity* (Detroit, 1973).
3. Sun Oil, Bristol-Myers, and American Express recently commissioned an Oxford study on the future of American capitalism; predicated on the fact that the gap between the haves and have-nots is widening--e.g. "Is the Middle Class Doomed?", *New York Times Magazine*, September 7, 1986 and "Is the Middle Class Shrinking?", *Time*, November 3, 1986--an explosion is predicted as personal anxiety converts to social and political tension over downward mobility: *America in Perspective*, Oxford Analytica (New York, 1986). There is a kind of crude analog here to the "artificial negativity" thesis, as American capitalism in its decline is seen as captive to outmoded ideologies and unable to connect with the realities of coming crisis.
4. Earlier contributions to what some have termed the "breakdown" thesis by the author: *Breakdown: Data on the Decomposition of Society* (Milwaukee, OR, 1976); "The Promise of the 80's" *Fifth Estate* (June, 1980); "The 80's So Far," *Fifth Estate* (Fall, 1983); "Present Day Banalities," *Fifth Estate* (Winter-Spring, 1986). Available in *Elements of Refusal*, Left Bank Books, (Seattle, 1987).
5. Paul Piccone, "Narcissism after the Fall: What's on the Bottom of the Pool?" (Symposium on Narcissism) *Telos* 44 (Summer, 1980), p. 114.
6. Two-parent families declined by 751,000 from 1980 to 1985, more than twice the decrease in any five-year period since 1970, according to the Census Bureau (figures released November 4, 1986).
7. "Life of a Yuppie Takes a Psychic Toll," *U.S. News and World Report*, April 29, 1985; Douglas La Bler, "Madness Stalks the Corporate Ladder," *Fortune*, September 1, 1986.
8. A survey of *Journal of the American Medical Association* and *Archives of General*

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10. Joel D. Killen, et al., "Self-Induced Vomiting and Laxative and Diuretic Use among Teenagers," *Journal of the AMA*, March 21, 1986. This study of tenth-graders revealed a higher incidence of bulimia (binge-purge syndrome) than was previously thought--13% among the 1,728 under scrutiny.
11. Michael Waldholz, "Use of Psychotherapy Surges, and Employers Blanch at the Costs: the Anxiety of Modern Life," *Wall Street Journal*, October 20, 1986.
12. CBS Evening News, November 12, 1986. Too recent for further documentation, but see "Suicide by the Elderly Up," *Jet*, September 1, 1986.
13. A tiny, representative sampling: Gary Evans, ed., *Environmental Stress* (New York, 1982); "Stress!" (cover story, complete with contorted, screaming face), *Time*, June 6, 1983; Diane McDermott, "Professional Burn-out and Control," *Journal of Human Stress*, Summer, 1984; T.F. Riggart, *Stress Burnout: An Annotated Bibliography* (Carbondale, Illinois, 1985); Naomi Breslau and Glenn C. Davis, "Chronic Stress and Major Depression," *Archives of General Psychiatry*, April, 1986.
14. Muriel Dobbin, "Is the Daily Grind Wearing You Down?" *U.S. News and World Report*, March 24, 1986. In Oregon, where I'm writing this article, 42% of all Workers' Compensation claims filed by all employees in 1985 were based on "mental stress." Alan K. Ota, "Claims for Stress Increasing," *The Oregonian*, October 24, 1986.
15. Associated Press report of paper presented by Dr. Thomas Robertson, annual meeting of the American College of Cardiology, March 11, 1986.
16. Donald Ian Macdonald, "Can a 6-year old Be Suicidal?" *Journal of the AMA*, April 18, 1986.
17. Wayne S. Wooden, "Why Are Middle-Class Children Setting their Worlds on Fire?" *Psychology Today*, January, 1985.
18. Carlene Baum, et al., "Drug Use and Expenditures in 1982," *Journal of the AMA*, January 18, 1985.
19. For example: "Panel Proposes Drug Screening in Work Place," Associated Press, March 3, 1986; "Drugs on the Job" (cover story), *Time*, March 16, 1986; Irving R. Kaufmann, "The Battle Over Drug Testing," *New York Times Magazine*, October 19, 1986; Michael Waldholz, "Drug Testing in the Workplace: Whose Rights Take Precedence?" *Wall Street Journal*, November 11, 1986.
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48. For example, Jurgen Habermas, "What Does a Crisis Mean Today? Legitimation Problems in Late Capitalism," *Social Research*, Winter, 1973.
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51. Jean Baudrillard, *In the Shadow of the Silent Majority...or the End of the Social Order and Other Essays* (New York, 1983), p.23. However, Baudrillard explicitly eschews any negative, liberatory potential for the "mass," which he sees as voracious, irrational, and dumb, simply a black hole which may swallow the system but not thereby provide deliverance. True to post-structural obelance to an external, frozen reality, for Baudrillard the individual is extinct and negativity a meaningless term.

SOCIOLOGY
(continued)



350 SPECIAL READINGS (JAIL OPERATIONS) (2) UMC. (8 lessons, 8 submitted; 2 exams) Credit arranged. (This is designed as a 2 hour course) A structured problems course dealing with the functions and duties of the jail officer. This course is intended only for jail officers and administrators or people in training for such positions. Others who wish to enroll in this course may do so only with special permission. Inquiries should be directed to the Center for Independent Study through Correspondence. Textbooks are furnished free of charge. Prerequisite: 12 hours sociology and departmental approval.
Text:
Blumer, *Jail Operations*, United States Bureau of Prisons.

REVIEW

Noam Chomsky's TURNING THE TIDE

Turning the Tide; U.S. Intervention in Central America and the Struggle for Peace, by Noam Chomsky (published by South End Press, 116 St. Botolph St., Boston, MA. 02115, 1985, \$10.00)

Most U.S. citizens are incredibly naive about U.S. foreign policy. They swallow whole the official pretense that any unpleasanties elsewhere in the world are always the fault of "the Communists" (or some other bullies). And if, unlikely as it might seem, there is any suggestion of U.S. culpability in the bad news arriving from around the world, surely it's only a mistake, or an aberrancy in the otherwise helpful, friendly and kind web of international relationships woven by the U.S. government.

"Our" interests are always above-board, altruistic and, above all else, democratic. "We" may occasionally be "misguided," or "overzealous," or even "mistaken." But "we" always give of ourselves, provide unselfish aid to poorer nations, and help in development efforts which are intended to raise the "standard of living," improve the exercise of "democracy," and protect other less powerful countries from "threats of Soviet and Communist subversion."

However, at the same time, U.S. citizens have fairly consistently maintained a latent opposition to the underlying realities of the exercise of U.S. power. For the most part they are defenseless against the official party line (Demopublican/-Republican) which extolls U.S. virtues and blames every incident of international violence, misery and suffering on "the Communists." Yet, many of the individual instances of U.S. bullying, exploitation, and violence evoke widespread disapproval once they are made generally known—despite the U.S. public's failure to perceive or understand that underlying patterns of U.S. manipulation and intervention give rise to an unending stream of "isolated," "individual" abuses.

In a long series of essays and books, the long-time anarchist, and, despite that fact, somewhat respectable U.S. policy critic (partly due to his international reputation in philosophy and linguistics), Noam Chomsky, has provided us with detailed descriptions of both U.S. policy patterns, their underlying causes (the centers of power they serve), and the processes through which they have been consistently implemented, and defended from the latent opposition of the U.S. public. His books have included *American Power and the New Mandarins*, *The Fateful Triangle; Israel, the United States, and the Palestinians*, and the two volumes of *The Political Economy of Human Rights* written with Edward S. Herman, Vol. 1: *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism* and Vol. 2: *After the Cataclysm: Postwar Indochina and the Reconstruction of Imperial Ideology*.

One of Chomsky's most recent efforts is his book *Turning the Tide; U.S. Intervention in Central* (Continued on opposite page)

INTERVENTION IN VIETNAM AND CENTRAL AMERICA: PARALLELS AND DIFFERENCES

By Noam Chomsky

Illustrations by Garel Moiseiwitsch

In the real world, U.S. global planning has always been sophisticated and careful, as you'd expect from a major superpower with a highly centralized and class conscious dominant social group. Their power, in turn is rooted in their own ownership and management of the society and economy, as is the norm in most societies. During World War II, American planners were very well aware that the United States was going to emerge as a world-dominant power in a position of hegemony that had few historical parallels and they organized and met in order to deal with this situation.

From 1939 to 1945, extensive studies were conducted by the Council on Foreign Relations and the State Department. One group was called the War-Peace Studies Group, which met for six years and produced extensive geopolitical analyses and plans. The Council on Foreign Relations is essentially the business input to foreign policy planning. These groups also involved every top planner in the State Department with the exception of the Secretary of State.

The conception that they developed is what they called "Grand Area" planning. The Grand Area was to be a region that was subordinated to the needs of the American economy. As one planner put it, it was to be the region that is "strategically necessary for world control." The geopolitical analysis held that the Grand Area had to include at least the Western Hemisphere, the Far East, and the former British Empire, which we were then in the process of dismantling and taking over ourselves. This is what is called "anti-imperialism" in American scholarship. The Area was also to include Western and Southern Europe and the oil-producing regions of the Middle East, and in fact, it was to include everything, if that were possible. Detailed plans were laid for particular regions of the Grand Area and also for international institutions that were to organize and police it, essentially in the interests of this subordination to American domestic needs.

With respect to the Far East, the plans were roughly as follows: Japan, it was understood, would sooner or later be the industrial heartland of Asia once again. Since Japan is a resource-poor area, it would need Southeast Asia and South Asia for resources and markets. All of this, of course, would be incorporated within the global system dominated by the United States.

With regard to Latin America, the matter was put most plainly by Secretary of War Henry Stimson in May 1945 when he was explaining how we must eliminate and dismantle all regional systems dominated by any other power, particularly the British, while maintaining and extending our own system. He explained with regard to Latin America as follows: "I think

that it's not asking too much to have our little region over here which never has bothered anybody."

The basic thinking behind all of this has been explained quite lucidly on a number of occasions. (This is a very open society and if one wants to learn what's going on, you can do it; it takes a little work, but the documents are there and the history is there also.) One of the clearest and most lucid accounts of the planning behind this was by George Kennan, who was one of the most thoughtful, humane, and liberal of the planners, and, in fact, was eliminated from the State Department largely for that reason. Kennan was the head of the State Department Policy Planning Staff in the late 1940s. In the following document, PPS23, February 1948, he outlined the basic planning:

We have about 50 percent of the world's wealth, but only 6.3 percent of its population. In this situation, we cannot fail to be the object of envy and resentment. Our real task in the coming period is to devise a pattern of relationships which will permit us to maintain this position of disparity. We need not deceive ourselves that we can afford today the luxury of altruism and world-benefaction. . . . We should cease to talk about vague and . . . unreal objectives such as human rights, the raising of the living standards, and democratization. The day is not far off when we are going to have to deal in straight power concepts. The less we are hampered by idealistic slogans, the better.

There are some questions that one can raise about Kennan's formulation, a number of them, but I'll keep to one. One is whether he is right in suggesting that "human rights, the raising of the living standards, and democratization" should be dismissed as irrelevant to American foreign policy. Actually, a review of the historical record suggests a different picture, namely that the United States often has opposed with tremendous ferocity, and violence, these elements—human rights, democratization, and the raising of the living standards.

This is particularly the case in Latin

America and there are very good reasons for it. The commitment to these doctrines is inconsistent with the use of harsh measures to maintain the disparity, to insure our control over 50 percent of the resources, and our exploitation of the world. In short, what we might call "the First Freedom" (there were Four Freedoms, you remember, but there was one that was left out), the Freedom to Rob, and that's really the only one that counts; the others were mostly for show. And in order to maintain the freedom to rob and exploit, we do have to consistently oppose democratization, the raising of living standards, and human rights. And we do consistently oppose them; that, of course is in the real world.

This Top Secret document referred to the Far East, but Kennan applied the same ideas to Latin America in a briefing for Latin American ambassadors in which he explained that: "One of the main concerns of U.S. policy is the protection of our raw materials." Who must we protect our raw materials from? Well, primarily, the domestic populations, the indigenous populations, which may have ideas about raising living standards. And that's inconsistent with maintaining the disparity. How will we protect our raw materials from the indigenous population? Well, the answer is the following:

The final answer might be an unpleasant one, but . . . we should not hesitate before police repression by the local government. This is not shameful, since the Communists are essentially traitors. . . . It is better to have a strong regime in power than a liberal government if it is indulgent and relaxed and penetrated by Communists.

Well, who are the Communists? "Communists" is a term regularly used in American political theology to refer to people who are committed to the belief that "the government has direct responsibility for the welfare of the people." I'm quoting the words of a 1949 State Department intelligence report which warned about the spread of this grim and evil doctrine, which does, of course, threaten "our raw materials" if we can't



abort it somehow.

In the mid-1950s, these ideas were developed further. For example, one interesting case was an important study by a prestigious study group headed by William Yandell Eliot, who was the Williams Professor of Government at Harvard. They were also concerned with what Communism is and how it spreads. They concluded accurately that the primary threat of Communism is the economic transformation of the Communist powers "in ways which reduce their willingness and ability to complement the industrial economies of the West." That is essentially correct and is a good operational definition of "Communism" in American political discourse. Our government is committed to that view.

If a government is so evil or unwise as to undertake a course of action of this sort, it immediately becomes an enemy. It becomes a part of the "monolithic and ruthless conspiracy" to take over the world, as John F. Kennedy put it. It is postulated that they have been taken over by the Russians if that's the policy that they appear to be committed to.

American policy toward Nicaragua after the 1979 revolution could have been predicted by simply observing that the health and education budget of Nicaragua rose rapidly, that an effective land reform program was instituted, and that the infant mortality rate dropped very dramatically, to the point where Nicaragua won an award from the World Health Organization for health achievements (all of this despite horrifying condi-

In May, 1945, Secretary of War Henry Stimson explained with regard to Latin America as follows: "I think that it's not asking too much to have our little region over here which never has bothered anybody."

tions left by the Somoza dictatorship which we had installed and supported, and continued to support to the very end, despite a lot of nonsense to the contrary that one hears). If a country is devoted to policies like I've just described it is obviously an enemy. It is part of "the monolithic and ruthless conspiracy"—the Russians are taking it over. And, in fact, it is part of a conspiracy. It is part of a conspiracy to take from us what is ours, namely, "our raw materials," and a conspiracy to prevent us from "maintaining the disparity," which of course, must be the fundamental element of our foreign policy.

Well, it is obvious that a country of this sort is an enemy—that is, part of "the monolithic and ruthless conspiracy"—and that we have to take drastic measures to ensure that "the rot does not spread," which is the terminology constantly used by the planners. In fact, when one reads reports of this kind or looks at the health and education statistics—the nutritional level, land reform, and so on—one can understand very well

why American hostility to Nicaragua has reached such fanatic, and almost hysterical levels. It follows from the geopolitical conception previously outlined.

The people who are committed to these dangerous heresies, such as using their resources for their own purposes or believing that the government is committed to the welfare of its own people and so on, may not be Soviet clients to begin with and, in fact, quite regularly they're not. In Latin America, they are often members, to begin with, of Bible study groups that become self-help groups, church organizations, peasant organizations, and so on and so forth. But by the time we get through with them, they will be Soviet clients. They will have nowhere else to turn for any minimal form of protection against the terror and violence that we regularly unleash against them if they undertake programs of the kind described.

And this is a *net gain* for American policy. One thing you'll notice, if you look

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TURNING THE TIDE CONTINUED

America and the Struggle for Peace, which was published in 1985 by South End Press. In this work he takes U.S. policies in Central America head-on and shows in detail just how despicable they really are.

He begins by revealing the true underlying dynamics of U.S. policy in the policy-makers own words—the defense and expansion of U.S. systems of domination and exploitation throughout the world in order to maintain the overwhelming disparity in power and wealth between the U.S. and the rest of the world. In the words of one State Department planner, writing in a "Top Secret" document (to hide this reality from the U.S. public):

...we have about 50% of the world's wealth, but only 6.3% of its population... In this situation, we cannot fail to be the object of envy and resentment. Our real task in the coming period is to devise a pattern of relationships which will permit us to maintain this position of disparity without positive detriment to our national security.

The essential truth of U.S. policy could not be made much plainer than this.

Of course, the full reality is a little more complex. The "we" which is spoken of by this planner is rather ambiguous. In actuality it is not the U.S. population as one might naively suppose, but the U.S. elite which actually disposes of the vast majority of U.S. wealth and power. And, while this planner implies elsewhere in the document quoted from that the U.S. should ignore objectives such as "human rights, the raising of the living standards, and democratization," in fact it has always been U.S. policy to actively oppose these objectives, except in a few special cases like Israel (and even then, they have only been promoted to a very limited degree).

Chomsky goes on to show that, rather than the official public justification for U.S. interventions—usually some form of the "containment of Communism" argument—the predominant reason for U.S. violence being unleashed on relatively defenseless countries the world over has consistently been U.S. defense of its "interests" against any possibilities that indigenous populations might acquire the power to control some of their own wealth and resources.

In U.S. policy terms Chomsky argues persuasively that this historical practice can be formulated as a variant of the domino theory which Chomsky calls the "rotten apple theory." He argues that:

The prime concern throughout is that if there is one rotten apple in the barrel, then "the rot will spread," namely, the "rot" of successful social and economic development of a form that would constrain the [power of the U.S. to control access to markets, military bases and the raw materials of other countries].(p.67)

Any strategy or tactic which can possibly further U.S. "interests" as defined in this way not only can

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INTERVENTION in Vietnam and Central America CONTINUED

over the years, is that the United States quite consistently tries to create enemies if a country does escape from the American grip. What we want to do is drive the country into being a base for the Russians because that justifies us in carrying out the violent attacks which we must carry out, given the geopolitical conception under which we organize and control much of the world. So that's what we do, and then we "defend" ourselves. We engage in self-defense against the Great Satan or the Evil Empire or the "monolithic and ruthless conspiracy."

More generally, the Soviet Union plays the same kind of game within its own narrower domains, and that explains a

good bit of the structure of the Cold War, in fact.

Well, what has all of this meant for Indochina and Central America? Let's begin with Indochina.

Now remember I'm talking about the real world, not the one in the PBS television series and so on. In the real world, by 1948, the American State Department recognized, explicitly, that Ho Chi Minh was the sole significant leader of Vietnamese nationalism, but that if Vietnamese nationalism was successful, it could be a threat to the Grand Area, and therefore something had to be done about it. The threat was not so much in Vietnam itself, which is not terribly impor-

tant for American purposes (the Freedom to Rob in Vietnam is not all that significant); the fear was that "the rot would spread," namely the rot of successful social and economic development. In a very poor country which had suffered enormously under European colonialism, successful social and economic development could have a demonstration effect. Such development could be a model for people elsewhere and could lead them to try to duplicate it and gradually the Grand Area would unravel.

So, for example, when the Bishop regime in Grenada began to take any constructive moves, it was immediately the target of enormous American hostility, not because that little speck in the Caribbean is any potential military threat or any of that sort of business. It is a threat in some other respects; if a tiny, nothing-country with no natural resources like this can begin to extricate itself from the system of misery and oppression that we've helped to impose, then others who have even more resources might be tempted to do likewise.

Well, we recognized that we had to prevent the rot from spreading so we had to support France in its effort to reconquer its former colony, and we did so. By the time the French had given up, we were providing about 80 percent of the costs of the war and in fact we came close to using nuclear weapons towards the end, by 1954, in Indochina.

There was a political settlement, the Geneva Accords, in 1954, which the United States bitterly opposed. We immediately proceeded to undermine them, installing in South Vietnam a violent, terrorist regime, which, of course, rejected (with our support) the elections which were projected. Then, the regime turned to a terrorist attack against the population, particularly against the anti-French Resistance, which we called the Viet Cong, in South Vietnam. The regime had killed about 80,000 people (that means we had killed, through our plans and mercenaries) by the time John F. Kennedy took over in 1961. This assault against the population, after several years, did arouse resistance—such acts have a way of doing that—and, by 1959, the anti-French Resistance received authorization from the Communist leadership, to use violence in self-defense. Then, the government, which we had established, immediately began to collapse because it had no popular support, as the United States conceded.

Then Kennedy had a problem. It's important to realize how he handled this. This is one of the *dis*-similarities between Vietnam and Central America to which I'll return. In 1961 and 1962 Kennedy simply launched a war against South Vietnam. That is, in 1961 and 1962, the American Air Force began extensive bombing and defoliation in South Vietnam, aimed primarily against the rural areas where 85 percent of the population lived. This was part of a program designed to drive several million people into concentration camps, which we called "strategic hamlets," where they would be surrounded by armed guards and barbed wire, "protected," as we put it, from the guerrillas who, we conceded, they were willingly supporting. That's what we call "aggression" or "armed attack" when some other country does it. We call it "defense" when we do it.

This was when the "defense" of South Vietnam escalated, with this attack in 1961 and 1962. But that again failed. The resistance increased, and by 1965, the United States was compelled to move to an outright land invasion of South Vietnam, escalating the attack again. We also at that time initiated the bombing of North Vietnam, which, as anticipated, brought North Vietnamese troops to the South several months later.

Throughout, however, the major American attack was against South Vietnam. When we began bombing North Vietnam

in February 1965, we extended the bombing of South Vietnam which had already been going on for several years. We extended the bombing of South Vietnam to triple the scale of the bombing of North Vietnam, and throughout, it was South Vietnam that bore the main brunt of the American war in Indochina. We later extended the war to Cambodia and Laos.

As far as the major aims were concerned, the American war was a smashing success. For one thing, there was a huge massacre. The first phase of the war, the French war, probably left about half a million dead. From 1954 to 1965 we succeeded in killing maybe another 160,000 to 170,000 South Vietnamese, mostly peasants. The war, from 1965 to 1975, left a death toll of maybe in the neighborhood of 3 million. There were also perhaps a million dead in Cambodia and Laos. So all together about 5 million people were killed, which is a respectable achievement when you're trying to prevent any successful social and economic development. Furthermore, there were millions and millions of refugees created by the American bombardment, which was quite extraordinarily savage, not to mention the murderous ground operations.

The land was devastated. People can't farm because of the destruction and unexploded ordnance. And this is all a success. Vietnam is not going to be a model of social and economic development for anyone else. In fact, it will be lucky to survive. The rot will not spread. We also made sure of that by our actions in the surrounding areas, where we buttressed the American position.

The post-war American policy has been designed to insure that it stays that way. We follow a policy of what some conservative business circles out of the United States call "bleeding Vietnam." That is, a policy of imposing maximum suffering and harshness in Vietnam in the hope of perpetuating the suffering and insuring that only the most harsh and brutal elements will survive. Then you can use their brutality as a justification for having carried out the initial attack. This is done constantly and quite magnificently in our ideological system. We are now supporting the Pol Pot forces; we concede this incidentally. The State Department has stated that our reason for supporting the Democratic Kampuchea Coalition, which is largely based on Khmer Rouge forces, is because of its "continuity" with the Pol Pot regime; therefore we support it indirectly through China or through other means. This is part of the policy of "bleeding Vietnam." Also, of course, we offer no aid, no reparations, though we certainly owe them. We block aid from international institutions and we've succeeded in blocking aid from other countries.

India tried to send, in 1977, 100 buffalo, a very small amount, to Vietnam to try to replenish the buffalo herd that was destroyed in the war. We tried to block it by threatening to cancel Food for Peace aid to India if they sent the 100 buffalo. Mennonites in the United States tried to send pencils to Cambodia; again the State Department tried to block it. They also tried to send shovels to Laos to dig up the unexploded ordnance. Of course, we could do it easily with heavy equipment, but *that* we are plainly not going to do.

Let's turn to Central America, that is, "our little region over here that never has bothered anybody," as Henry Stimson put it. Major U.S. military intervention in Central America began 131 years ago in 1854 when the United States Navy bombarded and destroyed a port town in Nicaragua, San Juan del Norte. This town was in fact captured for a few days by contras from Costa Rica about a year

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be, but inevitably has been and will be used. Regardless of the cost involved to the region affected—in human lives, in ecological destruction, or in sheer suffering and immiseration.

But, while Chomsky makes it clear that the price in other peoples' lives is in itself never too high for the U.S. to bear in pursuit of its objectives, certain costs to the U.S. do count in its calculations. These include the dollar costs of CIA subversion and military intervention, the continuing possibilities of domestic destabilization resulting from widespread discontent with U.S. policies, and possible international consequences of intervention.

However, even when the cost/benefit analysis results in U.S. withdrawal from an intervention as in the case of Vietnam, the game is by no means conceded. The strategy and tactics are merely continued through less intense means, both to cut losses involved, and to remain in readiness for future openings when conditions may become more favorable for U.S. "success."

Thus, rather than conceding any reality to the horrible facts of what the U.S. put the Vietnamese people through, and rather than taking any responsibility whatsoever for the disastrous condition of the country at the end of the Vietnam war, the U.S. government and its well-paid apologists continue a propaganda war blaming every setback on the Communists, even when they must be invented or fabricated. Every possible avenue continues to be taken to sabotage the Vietnamese economy, to frustrate its attempts to gain international support, and to prevent it from rebuilding its totally devastated countryside. This includes the continuation of CIA attacks, support for anti-Vietnamese guerrillas, and attempts to exacerbate tensions between Vietnam and the Chinese in order to harass and bleed them without respite.

The same scenario is being repeated now in Nicaragua, where the U.S. is putting on pressure, and directly or indirectly attacking the country, on every front—militarily, politically, economically, ideologically,...including use of well-worn tricks such as forcing the Nicaraguans to

buy arms from the Soviet bloc (for their self-defense from the attacks of the U.S. proxy "Contra" army) by intentionally drying up all other sources, in order to be able to accuse the Nicaraguans of entering the Soviet orbit.

"They attack us and then won't allow us to defend ourselves," Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto commented while rejecting U.S. charges that Nicaragua plans "offensive actions" against El Salvador and Honduras. This miracle of hypocrisy is "like a torturer who pulls out the fingernails of his victim, then gets angry because the victim screams in pain," or a cowardly thug who sends a collection of goons to beat up some child in a kindergarten whom he doesn't like, then whines piteously if the child raises his hands in self-defense. (p.169)

No deceit, subterfuge or treachery is ever too low. Everything will be tried until the job is done.

Yet, from our position here within the empire, we are in a position to be able to affect this train of events, though such an eventuality is exactly what the government, the corporate "public relations" sector, and the mass media are continually mobilized to prevent. Despite the whole process of systematic indoctrination we are subject to, and despite the tightly-controlled corporate-owned media, there remains a certain margin of relative freedom available for us to act within.

However, as Chomsky makes clear, it is not enough for us to simply oppose any one particular "excess," or to attempt to "reform" the current system to make it a little less inhuman and a little less bloodthirsty. Such approaches will only prolong the life of an *essentially* sick system, giving it an even greater overall legitimacy than it now possesses. Instead, practical and realizable social and institutional alternatives must be constructed. An antiauthoritarian America must first be imagined, then the vision must be communicated and generalized before the reality can be constructed. We should be aiming at nothing less. —Lev Chernyi

ago. The press made a big fuss about it, but they failed to note the historical antecedents. Our bombing and destruction of the town was not a capricious act. It was an act of revenge. A yacht owned by the American millionaire Cornelius Vanderbilt had sailed into the port and an official had attempted to levy port charges on it. So, in revenge, the Navy burned the town down to the ground.

Well, that was our first military intervention in Nicaragua and there have been many since. In the first third of this century, the U.S. sent military forces to Cuba, Panama, Mexico, and Honduras and occupied Haiti for twenty years. There, under Wilson, we reinstituted slavery, burned villages, destroyed, tortured, and left a legacy which still remains, in one of the most miserable corners of one of the most miserable regions in the world. Woodrow Wilson, the great apostle of self-determination, celebrated this doctrine by invading Mexico, Haiti and by launching a counter-insurgency war in the Dominican Republic, again, with ample destruction and torture. There, again, we established a long-lasting military dictatorship, under Trujillo, one of the worst dictators we managed to establish in this region. The United States invaded Nicaragua repeatedly, finally leaving behind a brutal, corrupt, and long-lasting military dictatorship, the regular consequence of U.S. intervention.

In the post World War II period, there have been military interventions in Guatemala (probably the country which comes closest in the contemporary world to Nazi Germany), Cuba, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador and Grenada. A twenty-year war of terrorism was waged against Cuba. Cuba has been the target of more international terrorism, probably, than the rest of the world combined and, therefore, in the American ideological system, it is regarded as the source of international terrorism, exactly as Orwell would have predicted. And now there's a war against Nicaragua.

The impact of all of this has been absolutely horrendous. There's vast starvation throughout the region while crop lands are devoted to exports to the United States. There's slave labor, crushing poverty, torture, mass murder, every horror you can think of. In El Salvador alone, from October 1979 (a date to which I'll return) until December 1981—approximately two years—about 30,000 people were murdered and about 600,000 refugees created. Those figures have about doubled since. Most of the murders were carried out by U.S.-backed military forces, including so-called "death squads." The efficiency of the massacre in El Salvador has recently increased with direct participation of American military forces. American planes based in Honduran and Panamanian sanctuaries, military aircraft, now coordinate bombing raids over El Salvador, which means that the Salvadoran Air Force can more effectively kill fleeing peasants and destroy villages, and, in fact, the kill rate has gone up corresponding to that.

At the same time, the war against Nicaragua has left unknown thousands killed, these added to the 50,000 or so killed in the last stages of the Somoza dictatorship. Since we overthrew the democratic government of Guatemala in 1954, according to a Guatemalan human rights group in Mexico (none can function in Guatemala), about 150,000 people have been murdered, again, primarily by U.S.-backed forces and sometimes with direct U.S. military participation.

These figures kind of lose their meaning when you just throw out numbers. You see what they mean when you look more closely at the refugees' reports: for example, a report by a few people who succeeded in escaping from a village in Quiche province, where the government troops came in, rounded up the population, and put them in the town building.



One thing you'll notice is that the United States quite consistently tries to create enemies if a country does escape from the American grip. What we want to do is drive the country into being a base for the Russians.

They then took all the men out and decapitated them. Then they raped and killed the women. Then they took the children and killed them by bashing their heads with rocks. This has been what our taxes have been paying for—sometimes by means of our proxies—since the 1954 successful overthrow of Guatemalan democracy, where we have effectively preserved order since. I might mention that the 1954 American-instigated coup was referred to by John Foster Dulles, the Secretary of State, as "a new and glorious chapter in the already glorious traditions of the American States."

Virtually every attempt to bring about any constructive change in this U.S.-constructed Chamber of Horrors has met with a new dose of U.S. violence. The historical record is one of the most shameful stories in modern history and naturally is very little known here, though in a free society it would be well-understood and taught in elementary school in all of its sordid and gruesome detail.

Throughout this period the public pose has always been that we are defending ourselves. So, in Vietnam, we are defending ourselves against the Vietnamese when we attack South Vietnam. It's what Adlai Stevenson at the United Nations called "internal aggression," another phrase that Orwell would have admired and one that we use quite commonly. "Internal aggression," meaning, aggression by the Vietnamese against us, in Vietnam—and we've often had to defend ourselves against that kind of internal aggression. Nicaragua today is another case. So, for example, when our mercenary army attacks Nicaragua, we argue that this is defense—that we are defending Mexico, Central America, and ultimately ourselves from Russian imperialism or "internal aggression."

Well, it's interesting to look at that in the light of history. Virtually everything that is now happening has happened before, in corresponding or very similar forms. Our historical amnesia prevents us from seeing that. Everything looks new and therefore we don't understand it. It must just be a stupid error.

So, for example, in the late 1920s, President Coolidge sent the Marines once again to Nicaragua. At that time we were defending Nicaragua against Mexico, now we are defending Mexico against Nicaragua. At that time we were defending Nicaragua against Russian imperialism when we sent the Marines that time, eventually ending up with the establishment of the Somoza dictatorship. President Coolidge, in fact, said, "Mexico was on trial before the world," when he sent the Marines into Nicaragua at that time. Notice that the bottom line remains the same as the cast of characters changes: Kill Nicaraguans.

What did we do before we had the Bolsheviks to defend ourselves against? For example, when Wilson sent the Marines to Haiti and the Dominican Republic, that was before the Bolshevik revolution, so we couldn't be defending ourselves against Russian imperialism. Well, then we were defending ourselves against the Huns. The hand of the Huns was particularly obvious in Haiti. If you look back, the Marine Commander there, Marine Commander Thorpe, explained that "the handwork of the German" was evident here because of the kind of resistance that the "niggers" were putting up. Obviously, they couldn't be doing it on their own so there must be German direction. The same sentiments were expressed throughout. So for example, in the Dominican Republic the resistance was being carried out by the people who The-

odore Roosevelt had, during an earlier intervention, called "damned Dagoes," or by "spigs," "coons," "higs," in the terms that are regularly used to describe the people against whom we're defending ourselves, the perpetrators of such "internal aggression."

Well let's go back a little further, because self-defense is deeply rooted in American history. In the 19th century, when we were wiping out the Native American population, we were defending ourselves against savage attacks from British and Spanish sanctuaries in Canada and Florida and therefore we had to take over Florida, and we had to take the West to defend ourselves from these attacks. In 1846 we were compelled to defend ourselves against Mexico. That aggression began deep inside Mexican territory, but again, that was self-defense against Mexican aggression. We had to take about a third of Mexico in the process, including California where the explanation was that it was a preemptive strike. The British were about to take it over, and, in self-defense, we had to beat them to it. And so it goes, all the way back. The Evil Empire changes, but the truth of the matter remains about the same. And if American history were actually taught, people would know these things. This is the core of American history.

Let me return to Kennan's formula, "human rights, the raising of the living standards, and democratization," considering now Latin America. I want to consider the question that I raised before: are they really irrelevant to our policy the way he suggested they ought to be? Let's take a closer look.

Take human rights. Now actually, that's an empirical question. You can study how American foreign policy is related to human rights, and it has been studied for Latin America and elsewhere. The leading American specialist on human rights in Latin America, Lars Schoultz, has a study published in *Comparative Politics*, January 1981, in which he investigated exactly that question. He asked how the human rights climate in a country correlated with American aid. He chose a very narrow conception of human rights, what he called, "anti-torture rights," that is, the right to be free from torture by the government and so on. And, in fact, he found there is a relationship between human rights and American foreign policy: namely, the more the human rights climate deteriorates, the more American aid increases. The correlation was furthermore strong. There was no correlation between American aid to need. This aid included military aid and it went on right through the Carter administration. To use his words, he said that "aid has tended to flow disproportionately to Latin American governments which torture their citizens," to "the hemisphere's relatively egregious violators of fundamental human rights." This might suggest that Kennan understated the case: human rights are not irrelevant, rather, we have a positive hatred of them. We send aid to precisely those governments which torture their citizens, and the more effectively they do so, the more we'll aid them. At least that's what the evidence shows in this and other studies.

A correlation isn't a theory. It's not an explanation. We still need an explanation, and number of them come to mind. One possible explanation would be that the American leadership just likes torture. So the more a government tortures its citizens the more we will aid them. That's a possible explanation, but it's an unlikely one. The real explanation is probably Kennan's: that is, it is irrelevant. Human rights are irrelevant. What we like is something else. There have been other studies that suggest a theory to explain the correlation.

There's one by a co-author of mine, Edward Herman, an economist at the University of Pennsylvania, who investigated the same sort of thing that

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Schultz studied, but on a worldwide basis. Herman again found the same correlation: the worse the human rights climate, the more American aid goes up. But he also carried out another study which gives you some insight into what's really happening. He compared American aid to changes in the investment climate, the climate for business operations, as measured, for example, by whether foreign firms can repatriate profits and that sort of thing. It turned out there was a very close correlation. The better the climate for business operations, the more American aid—the more we support the foreign government. That gives you a plausible theory. American foreign policy is in fact based on the principle that human rights is irrelevant, but that improving the climate for foreign business operations is highly relevant. In fact, that flows from the central geopolitical conception.

Now, how do you improve the business climate in a Third World country? Well, it's easy. You murder priests, you torture peasant organizers, you destroy popular organizations, you institute mass murder and repression to prevent any popular organization. And that improves the investment climate. So there's a secondary correlation between American aid and the deterioration of human rights. It's entirely natural that we should tend to aid countries that are egregious violators of fundamental human rights and that torture their citizens, and that's indeed what we find.

Well, so much for human rights. What about raising the living standards? In Latin America there has been economic growth. If you look, the GNP keeps going up but at the same time, typically, there is increased suffering and starvation for a very large part of the population. So, in one case, Brazil, the most important Latin American country, there has been what was called an "economic miracle" in the last couple of decades, ever since we destroyed Brazilian democracy by supporting a military coup in 1964. The support for the coup was initiated by Kennedy but finally carried to a conclusion by Johnson. The coup was called by Kennedy's ambassador, Lincoln Gordon, "the single most decisive victory for freedom in the mid-twentieth century." We installed the first really major National Security State, Nazi-like State, in Latin America, with high-technology torture and so on. Gordon called it "totally democratic," "the best government Brazil ever had." And that, in turn, had a significant domino effect in Latin America; Brazil is an important country. Well, there was an economic miracle and there was an increase in the Gross National Product. There was also an increase in suffering for much of the population.

So, for example, here are some statistics from a Brazilian scientific journal concerning Rio de Janeiro, which is far from the poorest area in Brazil. The figures on malnutrition for children showed that from 0 to 2.5 months, two-thirds of them suffered severe malnutrition, from 5 to 12 months, 40 percent, from 12 months to 2.5 years, 10 percent. Now, why do the figures go down? Well, you can figure that out: they die. The children die, therefore the figures go down. That's in Rio de Janeiro as one consequence of "the most decisive victory for freedom in the mid-twentieth century." And that story is duplicated throughout much of Latin America, where the United States has successfully intervened, from Haiti to the Dominican Republic, to Nicaragua and Guatemala and so on.

So much for the second element, raising of the living standards. What about



In the first third of this century, the U.S. sent military forces to Cuba, Panama, Mexico, and Honduras and occupied Haiti for twenty years. There, under Wilson, we reinstituted slavery, burned villages, destroyed, tortured, and left a legacy which still remains.

democratization? Well, we've repeatedly intervened to overthrow democratic governments. This is understandable. The more a country is democratic, the more it is likely to be responsive to the public, and, hence, committed to the dangerous doctrine that "the government has a direct responsibility for the welfare of the people," and, therefore, not devoted to the transcendent needs of Big Brother. Therefore, we have to do something about it. Democracy of O.K. but only as long as we can control it and be sure that it comes out the way we want, just as the Russians permit democratic elections in Poland. That is the typical history. So, in Guatemala, the government was democratic but out of control, so we had to overthrow it. Similarly in Chile under Allende. Or take the Dominican Republic, which has long been the beneficiary of our solicitous care. Woodrow Wilson began a major counterinsurgency campaign which ended in the early 1920's and which led to the Trujillo dictatorship, one of the most brutal and vicious and

corrupt dictatorships that we managed to install in Latin America. In the early 1960's it looked as though there was going to be a move towards democracy. There was, in fact, a democratic election in 1962. Juan Bosch was elected, a liberal democrat. The Kennedy Administration was very cool. The way it reacted is interesting. (You have to understand that the U.S. so totally dominates these countries that the U.S. embassy essentially runs them.) The American embassy blocked every effort that Bosch made to organize public support. So, for example, land reform, labor organizing, anything that could have developed public support against a military which was pretty certain to try another coup—any such effort was blocked by the Kennedy Administration. As a result, the predicted military coup took place and Washington, which was essentially responsible for the success of the coup, shortly after it, recognized the new government. A typical military dictatorship of the type we like was established. In 1965, there

was a coup by liberal, reformist officers, a constitutionalist coup, which threatened to restore democracy in the Dominican Republic, so we intervened again. That time we simply sent troops. A bloody and destructive war took place, many thousands of people were killed and we again succeeded in establishing a terror-and-torture regime. The country was also, incidentally, brought totally within the grip of American corporations. The Dominican Republic was virtually bought up by Gulf and Western and other corporations after the coup. The country was totally demoralized. It was, in fact, subjected to terror and suffering, crushing poverty and so on. So then we could have elections, because it was guaranteed that nothing would happen. They can even elect social democrats for all we care, the basic results having been achieved. The government would never be able to accomplish anything for its population, that is, for that part of the population which had not been killed or fled. In this region about 20 percent of the

population has come to the United States, and in places where they have easier access, such as Puerto Rico, the figure is about 40 percent.

Well, let's turn to El Salvador in connection with our attitude toward democratization. There were democratic elections in El Salvador in 1972 and 1977. In both cases the military intervened to abort them and installed military dictatorships. The people in Washington could not have cared less. There was no concern whatsoever. There were also the regular atrocities throughout this period, eliciting little concern in Washington. However, there were developments, two in fact, that did elicit concern in the late 1970's. One was that the Somoza dictatorship fell in 1979. There is much mythology about this, but the fact of the matter is that Carter supported Somoza till the very end, even after the natural allies of the United States, the local business community, turned against him. That was a danger sign and it worried the United States with regard to El Salvador. There was another development that was even more dangerous. There were the beginnings of popular democratic organizations within El Salvador of the sort I mentioned earlier: Bible study groups turning into self-help groups; peasant co-operatives, unions, all sorts of organizations which seemed to be establishing the basis for a functioning democracy.

Now, anybody who thinks, realizes that democracy doesn't mean much if people have to confront concentrated systems of economic power as isolated individuals. Democracy means something if people can organize to gain information, to have thoughts for that matter, to make plans, to enter into the political system in some active way, to put forth programs and so on. If organizations of that kind exist, then democracy can exist too. Otherwise it's a matter of pushing a lever every couple of years; it's like having the choice between Coca-Cola and Pepsi-Cola. In El Salvador there were dangerous moves in this direction in the 1970s with the development of what were called "popular organizations," and therefore, something had to be done about them because there might be real democracy. We plainly don't tolerate that.

These two developments did lead to some action on the part of the United States. In October 1979, the U.S. supported a reformist coup which overthrew the Romero dictatorship. There was, in fact, considerable fear that he was going to go the way of Somoza. Well, what happened then? The U.S. insisted that some of the harshest and most brutal military elements be prominently placed in the junta. The killing rapidly increased right after the coup. By early 1980, the left Christian Democrats, socialists, and reformist military elements had been eliminated from or had simply fled from the junta, and the country was in the hands of the usual thugs that we install in our domains. Duarte came in at that time as a useful cover, to preside over one of the great Central American massacres. The archbishop, Archbishop Romero, pleaded with President Carter not to send military aid. The reasons were the following: he said that military aid would "sharpen the repression that has been unleashed against the people's organizations fighting to defend their most fundamental human rights." Therefore he asked Carter not to send military aid. Well, of course, that was the very essence of American policy: namely, to increase massacre and repression, to destroy the popular organizations, and to prevent the achievement of human rights, so naturally the aid flowed and the war picked up steam. Archbishop Romero was assassinated shortly afterwards. In May 1980, under Carter remember, the war against the peasantry really took off in full force, largely under the guise of land reform.

The first major action was a joint operation of the Honduran and Salvadoran armies at the Rio Sumpul where about 600 people were killed as they tried to flee into Honduras. That massacre was suppressed by the American press for about 15 months, though it was published in the world press and the Church press, right here in Cambridge, for example. In fact, American press coverage during 1970 was unbelievably bad. In June 1980, the university in San Salvador was attacked and destroyed by the army. Many faculty and students were killed and much of the university facilities were simply destroyed and demolished. In November the political opposition was massacred. Meanwhile the independent media were destroyed.

This war had a number of significant successes. The popular organizations were destroyed; therefore we can now permit democratic elections—now that there is no concern anymore that they might mean something. These elections are carried out in "an atmosphere of terror and despair, of macabre rumor and grisly reality." That was the assessment by the head of the British Parliamentary Human Rights Group, Lord Chitnis, with regard to the 1984 elections in El Salvador—rather different from the media coverage here, as you may recall. The point is that once the basis for democracy has been destroyed, once state terrorism has been firmly established, then elections are entirely permissible, even worthwhile, for the sake of American public opinion. The contrast between our alleged concern for elections today and our actual concern for elections in the 1970s is, again, informative. Well, that was a success, namely destroying the popular organizations and so on. There was also, however, a failure.

The failure was that people began to join the guerrillas. There were only a few hundred guerrillas when all of this began. They grew to many thousands during this period. Of course, that's proof that the Russians are coming—anyone who understands the U.S. knows that. And, in fact, that is very similar to Vietnam in the 1950s. If you think through what I've just described, what happened in El Salvador under Carter and what happened in Vietnam under Eisenhower are very similar.

Well, meanwhile, we stepped up our war against Nicaragua, not because Nicaragua is brutal and oppressive. Even if you accept the harshest criticisms that have even a minimal basis in reality, by the standards of the governments that we support, Nicaragua is virtually a paradise. But we attack Nicaragua precisely because it is committed to a model of development that we cannot tolerate. Of course this is presented as defense against the Russians, and as proof that it's defense against the Russians, we note that they receive weapons with which they can defend themselves against our attack. Foreign Minister d'Escoto pointed out that it's like "a torturer who pulls out the fingernails of his victim and then gets angry because the victim screams in pain." Actually, a closer analogy would be a thug who hires a goon squad to beat up some kid in kindergarten who the thug doesn't like, and then begins whining piteously if the child raises his arms to protect himself. That would be a pretty accurate analogy to what's happening there.

Reagan's problem in El Salvador is very similar to Kennedy's in South Vietnam twenty years ago. There was severe internal repression in both cases, which was very successful in destroying popular organizations, killing a lot of people, and so on. However, the internal repression did elicit resistance which the state that we had installed was unable to control. Kennedy simply attacked South Vietnam with bombardment and defoliation. And Reagan has been trying to do the same in El Salvador for the last cou-

ple of years, but he has not been quite able to. He has been blocked by domestic opposition. He has therefore been forced to more indirect measures. These have certainly succeeded in killing many people and causing vast misery, but not yet in crushing the resistance. We are still short of U.S. Air Force bombings.

I've mentioned some of the similarities. What are the differences? Well, the main difference is that the United States has changed. When Kennedy attacked South Vietnam, there was no protest, virtually none. That was in the early 1960s when Kennedy began the direct military acts against South Vietnam. When Johnson escalated the attack against South Vietnam to a full scale land invasion, there was also very little protest. In fact, protests reached a significant scale only when several hundred thousand American troops were directly engaged in the war against South Vietnam, a war which by then extended well beyond.

In contrast, Reagan's attempt to escalate the war in El Salvador has met with considerable popular opposition here. And that's significant. In fact, that's one of the most significant facts of contemporary history.

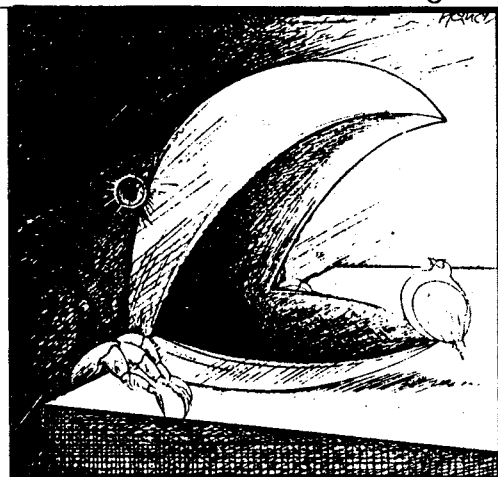
As recently as 1982, polls indicate that about 70 percent of the American population regard the Vietnam war not as a "mistake," but as "fundamentally wrong and immoral." Many fewer opinion leaders expressed that view, and virtually none of the really educated class or articulate intelligentsia ever took that position. That incidentally is quite typical. It's typical for educated classes to be more effectively controlled by the indoctrination system to which they are directly exposed, and in which they play a sort of social role as its purveyors, hence coming to internalize it. So this degree of servility to the party line is not unique to this example. But the point is there's a split, a very substantial split, between much of the population and those who regard themselves as its national leaders. That is even given a technical name—it's called the "Vietnam Syndrome." Notice the term "syndrome," as applied to a disease. The disease is that there's just a lot of people are opposed to massacre, aggression and torture, and feel solidarity with the victims. Therefore, something has to be done about that. It was assumed in the early 1980s that the disease had been cured, and by reading the productions of the educated classes, you would certainly have believed that. But, in fact, the disease was never very widespread and it's a problem—it impedes, it inhibits direct intervention and aggression.

Whether this opposition, which is quite real, can become sufficiently organized and effective to block further escalation—I don't know. It could be that the current level of attack on the population of Central America will suffice to achieve the major American military ends. What is clear, however, is that we're living through another chapter in a sordid and shameful history of violence and terror and oppression.

Unless we can muster the moral courage and the honesty to understand all of this, and to act to change it, as we indeed can, then it's going to continue and there will be many millions of additional victims who will face starvation and torture, or outright massacre, in what we will call "a crusade for freedom."

Noam Chomsky is a professor of philosophy at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He was early a critic of U.S. policy in Vietnam. This is Mr. Chomsky's excerpt of a speech he delivered at Harvard University in March. Caryl Chesson is an artist living in Vancouver, B.C.

This article and accompanying graphics have been reprinted from the Winter 1986 CLINTON ST. QUARTERLY (Vol. 8, No. 4). Books by Noam Chomsky will soon be available on consignment at the Columbia Community Grocery.



The politics of recycling

Continued from page 19

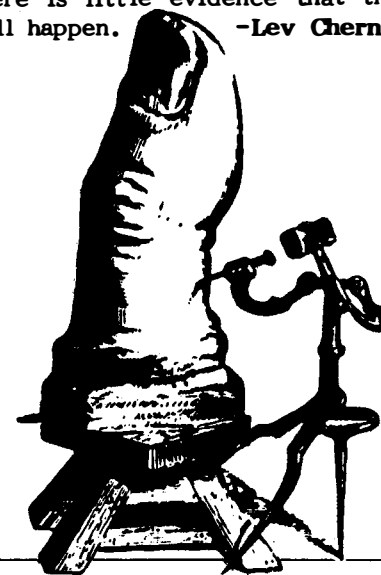
statewide mandatory recycling law. And as more and more state and local governments encounter the facts of less and less available land-fill space and increasing dumping costs, mandatory recycling laws are likely to become common.

The New Jersey law would require that glass, newsprint, aluminum and leaves be separated from other trash, and would create a statewide recycling system which could possibly make some aspects of recycling more "cost-efficient" (such as the transfer and sale of recycled materials).

However the real scandal involved in the politics of recycling is neither the footdragging attempt to sabotage our local "voluntary" recycling system (not entirely voluntary since it relies on extorted tax dollars), nor the obviously coercive nature of the New Jersey system (which will also inevitably involve the creation of yet another state bureaucracy, with all the inefficiency, corruption, and counter-productivity government monopolies are so notorious for). The real scandal is that these programs, their supporters, and their opponents all serve to focus attention only on the narrowly ameliorative concept of recycling, as if it were more than just one minor aspect of the technological juggernaut's ongoing destruction of our environment, our communities, and our very lives.

The really important questions are hardly ever posed, much less publicly debated. Ultimately the ecological concerns of this generation will have to evolve into a questioning of the fundamental structures of government, community, industry and technology if we are ever going to come to grips with the global nature of the current social/ecological crisis. So far, unfortunately, there is little evidence that this will happen.

-Lev Chernyi



Letters



We would like to encourage readers to write us in order to open a dialogue both with those who are sympathetic and those who are critical of anarchist theory and practice. All letters to ANARCHY will be printed with the author's initials only, unless it is specifically stated that her/his full name may be used, or that s/he wishes to remain anonymous. We will edit letters that are redundant, overly long, unreadable or boring. Address your letters to ANARCHY, c/o C.A.L., POB 380, Columbia, MO. 65205.

Insert tab @ in slot Z

Hello everybody,

I hope all is well in Columbia....

What I liked most about issue #12 was the shirtless picnic article & Alf Sprack's notes on playing for keeps. What the anarchist scene needs is some *praxis*, it seems to me, and the shirtless picnic did just that—it's good to see folks living freedom instead of just talking about it. A friend and I were in Des Moines last week visiting the Kindred Community & they showed us a recent *Iowa Socialist* that had an article about an action, a parade recently in Cedar Falls or Cedar Rapids or Cedar Bluffs or Cedar Something-or-other in Iowa where a group of women entered a float dressed—or rather, not dressed—as

the Statue of Liberty. The natives there weren't as friendly as in Columbia. A lot of the women watching yelled abusive remarks, rocks were thrown, & one woman was attacked by a man who ran to the float and grabbed one of her breasts. Fortunately she wasn't injured, though. There were no arrests on either side.

Alf Sprack's notes were really incisive & inspiring...some of the best I've read since Julian Beck's *Life of the Theatre* earlier this year, well last year, you know what I mean..."But I don't want to live in 'America.' I want to live on the land now under occupying forces; I want to make it a place which is truly our own." Amen. I'm afraid I don't have lots of brilliant proposals on how to get there, any blueprints for concrete projects, no paint-by-number pictures, no list of assembly instructions for an ideal society: insert tab @ slot Z...but maybe trying to lay out a concrete program for building the life we want is like the proverbial flashlight in search of the nature of darkness...maybe we just have to DO IT...I dunno....

Keep up the good work, which may or may not have anything to do with publishing the paper, that's up to you....

Keep in touch.
taller than a speeding bullet, B.H., Lawrence, KS.

Kiss-up award

"...kiddie porn is a subunderground hobby of certain sick fetishists and almost universally produced outside the United States...the adult [porn] industry, with its underground intelligence network, could ferret out sources of kiddie porn much more efficiently than the slow moving and slow-witted police authorities. Working with authorities on an organized basis, the adult industry could maintain confidentiality of its sources and track down the kiddie pornographers and snuff-film producers to a fare-thee-well.... And that kind of cooperation...might even make the police more friendly...." —Tom Reger, *Swinging Times* #58 (Undated, but received fall, 1986. Reger is managing editor of both *Swinging Times* and *Get Kinky*.)

I condemn imagery with real models that includes nonconsensual acts. However, I don't think getting it on with The Man is the way to handle the problem.

Some of what is smeared as "kiddie porn" is merely photos of nude children, not even being touched by anyone, let alone attacked. Reger doesn't say what he means by "kiddie porn." But no matter; if he works with the authorities it's *their* definition that counts.

Perhaps Reger is trying to get in good with the blue-law enforcers so they will leave alone his "adult porn" publications. But what makes him believe that after the vice squads suppress "kiddie porn" they will just turn in their badges and become parking lot attendants? More likely they will name something else "vice" and go after it. And what might that be, Thom? How about bondage and discipline, cross dressing, adult infantilism, and other practices covered in *Get Kinky*? All are "sick fetishes" to the censors.

Sincerely,

Sylvia Carlson, Veneta, OR.

[Sylvia Carlson produces *APAROS*, an unedited reader-written forum about sex, erotica, and relationships (het, lesbian, gay). For a sample copy send a SASE and state that you are over 18 to: Sylvia c/o Correspan, POB 759, Veneta, OR. 97487]

Arm your desires?

After reading your newsletter I found it very hard to believe that any of you self-proclaimed anarchists take anything seriously, including yourselves. The more I think about it, the more I believe that you don't even take your newsletter

seriously.

For example the article in #13 "...no to drugs." You started out with a good point but then in the end went so far to the other extreme that you sounded as if you were writing a satire on yourselves.

Throughout the paper you have these little pictures of what government is, all might I add negative. I tried to imagine a world without a government but I couldn't because I'm not that unrealistic or imaginative. Even an ideal society has an unequal class system, because no matter how you want to work it, someone always has the idea that their way is better—including yourselves.

You don't actually say in your paper what you do believe in, except "arm your desires." I doubt even you would want to live in a place where everyone did what their own desires told them to. In fact if it was my desire to mutilate your closest and dearest friend or even not so extreme, just exploit them, what would you do then? Arm your desire? End result war.

And what about those people whose desire it is to support the "700" Club or Jerry Falwell. When you play your little Falwell game you aren't costing them money, you're taking money from innocent people who had a real desire to support those people. You're actually hurting the people you claim you want to liberate.

You talk about President and Mrs. Reagan being hypocritical. You obviously haven't looked at yourselves very well.

If you were really interested in a better world, which I question whether you are, you would look for the answer in the God who created it instead of from humankind who messed it up.

But then according to you there isn't anyone home at my house, either.

Prefer to remain anonymous
Columbia, MO.

Lev Chernyi replies

Thank you for taking the time to write and send your somewhat thoughtful letter. You're at least partly right—we prefer not to take anything too seriously, including ourselves. However, at the same time we're dead serious about our opposition to authoritarian institutions like the state and to all the other forms of alienation to which we are constantly subjected.

Regarding the "Just say no to all drugs" article, you picked up on the fact that it's satire, but you missed something somewhere. As most people have undoubtedly realized, the cover of the last issue was a satirical version of a typical WEEKLY WORLD NEWS cover—for those who don't already know, this is one of those sensationalist NATIONAL ENQUIRER-clones that sell in supermarket

Columbia in perspective by Lev Chernyi HARMONICA VENGEANCE

I'm not one to want to spoil anyone's desire to party. But quite often I am repulsed by the ideological and institutional detritus, and/or the pure interpersonal bullshit, that too often goes along with what pass for parties around here.

Take, for instance, the current spate of marriages. In the local "alternative community" they seem to come in spurts of nuptial-mindedness that surrender any notion of genuine authenticity to the altars of the state, religion, and the family, the ideal of heterosexual monogamy, and the fixed idea of the socially-defined "couple." What could be genuinely ecstatic and erotic festivities affirming the radical commitment of our friends to their mutual challenge and growth within a caring community, usually turn out to be boring rituals suffocated by the dead-weight of patriarchal, authoritarian, and legalistic "traditions."

Not all are totally devoid of life, but most seem hell-bent to imitate dual funerals. In one recent marriage ceremony I attended, there were more references-per-second to the old corpse of Bethlehem than one usually hears from the nitwit televangelists. Family members wanted a religious event, and got one with a vengeance. Any genuine humanity was snuffed out by a nauseating blanket of Christian rhetoric and conservative morality. I'd rather attend a city council meeting and

watch the powers-that-be line their pockets at the public's expense, than have to witness the humiliating surrender of my friends to marriages like this.

Then again there's the example of the recent "Harmonic Convergence" gatherings. Instead of celebrating this looney event Subgenius-style (for those who don't know, the Church of the Subgenius is, at its best, an irreverently subversive mythmaking machine of surreal dimensions—at its worst, its just harmlessly boring), the participating locals actually appeared to take this idiocy seriously. The differences involved in these two possible perspectives are the differences between self-parodying comedy and the earnestness of self-lobotomized Jesus-freaks, or that between skeptical revellers and True Believers.

Instead of a potentially Ironic Insurgence, we were left with a spectacle of a merely Moronic Resurgence. All the local pinhead mystics and purveyors of spiritual commodities were out in force, advertising their latest gullabilities. The only thing proven by the whole event was that New Ageists will buy anything in the Aquarian department store, and that they'll flock like lemmings when the bargain basement rejects are on sale.

While some of the credulous locals were spouting things like, "Little beings responsible for main-

taining harmony on the planet 'will touch the hearts of humans' and awaken in them 'a responsibility for peace'"[*Columbia Daily Tribune*], slightly larger beings in the pay of the U.S. government were busy filling the guts of third world peasants, workers, and students, as well as of their innocent children, with gifts of lead. The truth of this harmonic vision was indicated when (I assume) technical errors at a local television newsroom resulted in an interview with a local Moronic Converger turning into a voiceover monologue about spiritual peace as the video frame switched to images of U.S. Navy ships and an animation of a "Star Wars" type nuclear war.

If the Demonic Conventioneers really wanted to gather in "power centers", instead of taking their vacations in Macchu Picchu or at the Great Pyramids, they would have been better advised to infest Washington, D.C. along with the nation's banks and corporate boardrooms.

I suppose there may be something to be said for the choice of wholeheartedly adopting the role of the (global) village idiot. At least the New Ageists seem to think there is.

"I don't want to scare anybody off by talking about UFOs," said one global idiot, who hopes to "receive instruction that will enable [him] to know how to affect the changes needed [to forestall Armageddon]." He might be better off looking to his own mind for "instruction," if he can just remember which astral plane he lost it on.



Letters

newstands across the country. And the "Ed Anger" column concerning the national anti-(illegal)drug hysteria is also a satirical version of the "Ed Anger" columns which appear in the WEEKLY WORLD NEWS on a regular basis.

The content of this column in our last issue was superficially a criticism of the national anti-drug campaign for being hypocritical in its restriction of its efforts solely to the persecution of those who manufacture, deal and use ILLEGAL drugs when the "drug problem" in this country is really much more vast. After all, legal drugs are being "abused" at a much greater rate than illegal ones ever will be, if for no other reason than that they are relatively easier to get (precisely because they are legal) and because the social stigma and sanctions concerning their use and abuse are much less than those concerning illegal drugs. And the dangers of some of the most (ab)used legal drugs (alcohol and tobacco/nicotine) far outweigh the dangers inherent in the most (ab)used illegal drugs (marijuana, for example).

However, beyond this superficial content we were also making fun of the typical Ed Anger-type authoritarian solution to social problems. This is why we ironically urged "the passage of laws to imprison brewers, rehabilitate smokers, and screen for caffeine-users." Etc. As anarchists the whole mentality of defining and attacking social problems from the perspective of the enforcement of a repressive social reality is repugnant. We want to make the point that in a genuinely free society not only would the solution to social problems be perceived to involve a refusal to use institutional violence (laws, police, prisons), but that "social problems" themselves would be perceived and defined in a completely different way from a completely different perspective.

As far as your fatalistic prejudice about the "impossibility" of a world without an imposed government is concerned, you should realize that first of all, most of humanity's (pre)history has consisted of life in stateless societies; secondly, that anarchists and others have attempted to implement libertarian social arrangements on a variety of scales with varying degrees of success in many different regions of the world (with Mexico, 1910-20, the Ukraine, 1918-1921, and Spain, 1936-7, being some of the more well-known examples); and finally, that even if, as you say, "someone always has the idea that their way is better," that doesn't mean that we must allow them to take control or remain in control of our lives!

And regarding your muddled confusion concerning the phrase "arm your desires"—

we would indeed wish "to live in a place where everyone did what their own desires told them to do." Such a prospect would seem to be a major improvement over a society in which everyone is coerced, blackmailed or tricked into doing what they don't want to do! If you really think our present world (in which desire is repressed, thwarted, perverted and mutilated) is preferable to a society arranged to facilitate the straightforward satisfaction of human desires, I think you might just achieve ecstasy if you turn yourself into the nearest state prison! There are certainly very few worries there about people actually being able to do what they really desire.

And lastly, your concern about the poor dupes who send their savings in to line the pockets of the nitwit televangelists is truly heartwarming, but if we should look for answers in "THE GOD" you talk about, why don't we just wait and see how he handles the problem!

If you really do have any interest in trying to figure out just what we're up to with this newspaper, might I suggest sending us a S.A.S.E. (self-addressed, stamped envelope for those who don't know) and we'll send you your very own copy of our 4 page statement, AS WE SEE IT! COMMON PERSPECTIVES ON OURSELVES, OUR WORLD AND SOCIAL CHANGE.

Try thinking just a little bit harder. Try using just a little more imagination. And try trusting in yourself just a little more. Maybe someday there will be someone home at your house!

Animal Rights?

Dear Anarchy,

I was curious as to what your stand on animal rights groups was, i.e.:

The Animal Protection Institute
6130 Freeport Boulevard
POB 22505
Sacramento, CA. 95822

United Action For Animals
1205 E. 42nd Street
New York, N.Y. 10017

I am a conservative Republican, but read your publication to get an idea of other views. While I can not condone your political or moral views, your attitudes of being unique,

creative, and different in a materialistic world are somewhat refreshing. I feel animal rights to be a very important issue and hope you feel the same, despite our ideological differences, as fellow human beings concerned about the negative effects human beings too often have on those unable to defend themselves.

A Fellow Idealist
(with a different ideology)

Lev responds

The Columbia Anarchist League has no particular "stand" on "animal rights," so I can only give you my personal opinion on the subject. (Badguy bowed out of giving his.) But first of all I have to say that while I am encouraged that any "conservative Republican" would be so open-minded as to regularly read ANARCHY, I can't help but find it somewhat repugnant that anyone who would support the U.S. funded massacres of human beings in Central America (and the rest of the world) would consider him or herself an idealist because s/he is concerned about the plight of other species. Of course, being a conservative Republican may mean something quite different to you than it does to me, and if I'm way off base I hope you'll correct me.

While there are a minority of anarchists who have a great interest in the "rights" of animals, I find the entire concept to be alien for two reasons (1) the idea of "rights" for humans or animals is a very mystifying concept; and (2) the condition of animals, while important in itself, is not as great a concern to me as the condition of other human beings.

I think that the entire mythology which has grown up around the idea of right usually confuses issues more than it clarifies them. People are so easily misled into believing in rights (just like believing in gods), that they entirely forget that they are only ideas—ideas with often strong social forces behind them, but nevertheless, only ideas. I much prefer, if people are going to use the concept at all, that they realize that the ultimate right is always, in reality, "might."

In the real world, wherever the most power lies, there lies the person, or faction,



or ideology, or class, etc. that will ultimately define what "right" is. Of course this is always a dynamic process, with differing groups continually fighting for the upper hand, resulting in an ever-changing hierarchy of rights and interpretations of right.

The usual naive conception of right on the other hand, is always directly tied into the morass of morality—the type of discourse which always says "You SHOULD do this, because it is the Right, or Good, or True, or somehow cosmically ordained thing to do." Thus it is no surprise that many of the people involved in animal rights activities regard their cause with religious devotion, and make about as much sense as fundamentalist Christians and Moslems do (i.e. very little).

In the real world there is no ultimate or absolute Right. There are only many, many people awash in a sea of confusion, struggling to realize their desires.

As far as the human treatment of animals is concerned, I am as appalled as anyone by the conditions of modern industrial food production which require the treatment of animals as purely dead meat, even while they remain alive. But I certainly don't think that humans "have no right" to kill animals for sustenance.

In general, I find that many "animal lovers" tend to treat "their" animals as badly as the food industry treats "its" animals. Domestication of any animals, human or otherwise, is repellent to me. And while I find it useful that certain animals (horses, some dogs) have been domesticated, I'm not exactly happy with the way they've generally

been enslaved to their human masters. Especially galling to me are those people who think that they own other living beings, and who think that by incarcerating animals in their own industrialized, urban environment they are doing them some kind of favor.

My own preference is that all animals run wild as much as possible, including human animals. It's not a question of animal rights, though, it's a question of abolishing civilization in the sense of domestication.

Spasibo bolshoye

Hi!

"Spasibo bolshoye" for the magazines. I'm enclosing some of the "heavy paper" for a subscription to Anarchy. As a perpetual activist, I enjoy getting a wide variety of radical outlooks and disinformation.

Nonetheless, carefully reading your publications suggests that you would be exceedingly intolerant of my point of view. For one thing, I've never been on the inside of a philosophy classroom. I gained my radicalism in the military and a series of factory jobs after discharge. I'm sort of an Alinskyite socialist, if such a thing can exist. I believe you'd consider me an insidious agent of the dread sin of "recuperation" by my grievous errors in actively organizing people to resist utility rate hikes and to demand government action (oh, heavens!) to clean up the neighborhood hazardous waste dump. (Who cleans up hazardous waste under anarchism? Who will keep their eyes on the already existing nuclear radwaste that'll be with us for x-thousand years to come?)

But there's a larger point I see in my own activism that for all your incisive theory you seem to have missed. The point is not each particular issue, standing as an "exception in a sound system;" rather, the essence of community-based organizing is to teach people: a) that what they think, what they feel, what happens to them, does, in fact, matter; b) that they can only overcome their own powerlessness by taking positive action; and c) to provide them with a set of skills that they will employ,

(Continued next page)



Letters



COMMENTS ON THE LOCAL SCENE

Towards an open discussion of Columbia's alternative community

For the most part the "alternative community" in Columbia has been a dismal failure. Of course, it would be unrealistic to expect too much from such an amorphous, unorganized and self-contradictory group of people. Which isn't to say that there aren't a few significant achievements that it can claim --most importantly, the Columbia Community Grocery (CCG) and KOPN-radio.

But even these "successes" have turned out to have more than their share of flaws. They have over and over again proven to be timidly defensive, unimaginative, and too often defeatist in attitude. The co-op has been diligently running its finances into the ground for years now, at the same time as it has given up on much of its pretense to being a genuinely cooperative and membership-controlled educational organization. While KOPN has found that the more successful it has become in raising the big bucks needed to run a more "professional" operation, the farther away it has gotten from its original inspiration and purposes (i.e. the more it has tended to "sell out").

Despite all the shortcomings that we criticize in Columbia's alternative community (and many people probably would agree that we've been among the more outspoken), those involved in the Columbia Anarchist League and this newspaper obviously remain a vital part of it. We have a profound and heartfelt interest in, not only this city and region, but even moreso in those people and institutions that are attempting to challenge the inertia of things-as-they-are in order to create what-might-be. But, at the same time, even when we're intimately involved in community projects and institutions, our influence on fundamental principles, policies and strategies usually remains marginal--precisely because we're radicals and no one wants to hear what we have to say, much less seriously discuss the fundamental problems we all face as a (more or less genuine) community in an open way.

There are, in my opinion, two related problems with this community that have led it to its present impasse. The first is a consistent fear of the expression of radical values and ideas, even among those who might identify themselves most comfortably in those terms, but especially among those whose outlook puts business-as-usual "success" ahead of any real agenda for social change. (The old "Radical ideas will turn off people who might give or spend money" line.) The second, and more fundamental problem, has been an almost phobic fear of any critical public discussion regarding this community, its institutions, direction, and potential. I could cite many, many examples of this fear, but the ones that stand out most prominently for me (because of my past intimate participation) involved the CCG Newsletter, and included incidents of attempted censorship, a threat to sue the CCG, attempts to delete the newsletter's funding, the suppression of one issue's distribution, etc. These incidents finally ceased only once the newsletter was silenced. (Recently, the first issue of a new series of the newsletter was produced, but it remains to be seen if it will continue, or if it will be open to discussion (Continued on opposite page)

Spasibo bolshoye Continued

experiment with, make mistakes with, be tested on, in the crucible of the particular campaign--but which they will never lose thereafter. This is empowerment. Perhaps some day, long after they've forgotten me, some crisis will arise and instead of floundering helplessly under the steamroller force of the "powers-that-be," they will respond, effectively with alacrity. Yes, I am a recuperator; I try to help people recoup power, the control over their own lives and destinies, of which they have been swindled.

One thing that tends to annoy me about anarchists is their general tendency to celebrate the solipsistic adolescent rebellion of the privileged scions of plutocracy, in a sense taking the part of apologists for the elite, "those who are not meek, yet nonetheless shall inherit the earth." At the same time, anarchists are often found to jump at the chance to bash those fighting the people's battles. In this context, compare your canonization of the "women with shirts off" demonstrators with your facile dismissal of the likes of M.L. King and Saul Alinsky. I'm sorry--as long as there are those who, out of need, are inadequately clothed, I find it hard to muster much righteous indignation against the prohibition of public tits. Moreover, the smug, elitist exhibitionism of such carnivals turns off from radicalism exactly those whose need for radical reconstruction is most desperate.

All this aside, I try to remain open-minded, look forward to receiving my future issues of *Anarchy*, and urge you to keep up your work and remain true to your ideals. Yr. humble, obednt. servant, L.H., Holyoke, MA.

Lev salutes Alinsky

First of all, let me thank you for subscribing. It's always nice to know there are a few people out there willing to put up with the "cognitive dissonance" (as the sociologists would say) involved in subscribing to publications they fundamentally disagree with.

Regarding your defense of "Alinskyite socialism," I think it certainly makes just as much sense as "Christian Marxism," or "Leninist Social-Democracy" does. That is to say, it makes as much sense as any other bastardized ideology does.

You don't make it clear what distinguishes your "socialism" from plain old liberal reformism, but I can't really fault you too much for that since hardly any contemporary "socialists" ever bother to try these days. I'm sure that most don't even think there IS a distinction to be made! It just goes to show how far

any genuinely radical meaning of the word "socialism" has been eroded.

If you really WANT to be a reformist liberal, I certainly won't fault you for your choice of Saul Alinsky as a model--he was probably one of the best...not despite, but because of the fact that he always operated on a superficial and fundamentally uncritical level. He never really attempted to "radicalize" people in any genuine sense. His efforts were limited to organizing and mobilizing people for struggles WITHIN the system of hierarchical capitalist society, not to struggle WITH the system itself. And within those limits he achieved a certain degree of success.

Of course, even Alinskyites don't always regard every one of his projects as without problems. For one example, the Back of the Yard Neighborhood Council, an organization which he helped start in the 30's, evolved into a conservative, racist neighborhood protection organization--not exactly what he envisioned at its birth. But it wasn't all that far from what he DID envision, either--only the ideological values were different, not the type of organization, nor the style of activity and leadership.

Alinsky seemed, like you, to mistake the idea of militancy and activism for that of radicalism. As has been said thousands of times in recent decades, radicalism involves going to the ROOT of problems, while, on the other hand, activists and militants can often push the most simplistic and superficial of ideas.

I had hoped to make it clear in our AS WE SEE IT! statement which you've obviously read, that what makes a struggle radical is neither its particular content nor its level of militancy. On the face of it there is nothing that is absolutely, or necessarily non-radical about people organizing to "resist utility rate hikes" (the recent auto-reduction movements in Italy, for example, were quite full of radical promise), or to "demand government action" to clean up hazardous waste (personally, I don't want to organize an affinity group to take on the task through direct action!).

What turns them into purely reformist activities is both their SELF-ISOLATION from their overall context and their LIMITATION of imagination and strategy to the accepted parameters of hierarchical thinking and behavior, i.e., to the rules of the game administered by those in power. Unfortunately, Alinsky was quite oblivious to these problems. At most, one might thus classify him as an activism-oriented liberal reformist.

A similar limitation of imagination is shown by your question concerning "who cleans up hazardous waste

under anarchism?" As if it were U.S. senators and representatives themselves who currently put on the radiation suits and do the dirty work! Take a few seconds and try just once thinking for yourself about who might clean up hazardous waste in a non-authoritarian society, and just how they might be organized...and you might surprise yourself with a fairly plausible answer!

On the other hand, your criticism of anarchists' alleged "general tendency to celebrate the solipsistic adolescent rebellion of the privileged scions of the plutocracy, in a sense taking the part of apologists for the elite," has left me scratching my head. What is that supposed to MEAN?

I don't think that all the women taking part in the shirtless picnic you refer to were just "rich bitches" out to increase their privileges as the rest of society starves around them. Of course, YOU might not care about it, since it isn't YOUR tits which the law keeps covered through threats of violence and imprisonment. However, this is not only a sexist attitude, but just as importantly, it is a failure to see the intimate links between our social poverty (sexual repression, sexism, and authoritarian relationships in general) and the economic poverty which could not exist without the authoritarian institutions that enforce it.

It is puzzling to me why you sing the praises of "empowerment" where community organizing is concerned, yet shun the obviously self-empowering direct action involved in the shirtless picnic. Maybe this is because these women took their struggle into their own hands, and didn't need an outside organizer to fight their battle for them.

Frankly offended

Dear Anarchy,

I just finished reading the "letters" section of issue #13 and frankly, it offended me.

Why can't you allow individuals to express their opinions without interrupting with "Editor's notes" or dictating the "correct" views in sarcastic responses?

I am an atheist, but I recognize the right of others to practice their faiths. I am a socialist humanist, but I understand that some people have different ideologies and values. Although I wholeheartedly disagree with the readers who say anarchists should be shipped out of the country, Satan rules "disbelievers," and the Vietnam War was justified, I feel they have a right to express their opinions freely. (Just as I have a right to demonstrate against Apartheid and U.S. intervention in Central America.) But freedom of speech isn't enough. I don't believe true anarchy--in the form of



Letters

free action for the individual—will occur until our views are met with respect and dignity, regardless of their content.

I am anxious to see what snide responses you will publish with my letter. How ironic that I turn from the close-mindedness and persecution of conservatives, only to find equally vehement intolerance here! Maybe the two ends of the spectrum aren't so different after all.

Sincerely,
N.W., Columbia, MO.

Snide response

Dear "frankly offended,"

A gold star and one step forward for your atheist disbelief, but you've taken two steps backward with your "socialist humanism!"

First off, I wonder if you're ever offended with the responses to anarchist letters in the conservative press, or even the "middle-of-the-road" press (whatever that might be) or the liberal press? I bet not! And just why is that? The answer is obvious—because they refuse to print 99% of such letters (which of course cuts way down on the number that are ever written in the first place). Well then, how about the anarchist letters to the "socialist humanist" press. Struck out again, did you? What? No "letters" columns at all? Or at best, columns that only allow nice, uncritical things to be said, or columns in which only snippets of letters are allowed.

How many critical letters have you written to the slandering, sanctimonious publications of the religious right? I bet you haven't bothered because you know they wouldn't publish a letter from an atheist (even a "socialist humanist" one) anyway! So what's the problem with our practice of printing every letter from every kook who bothers to write us? It's the fact that we actually tell them what we think of their letters, that's what—a cardinal sin according to socialist humanism, I suppose.

You did catch me being impolite in one respect which I normally try to avoid—and that was in my interjection of an "Editor's note" for purposes of humor, rather than for informational purposes (my usual policy). My apologies. And I'll try harder to resist the temptation in the future.

But as far as "dictating the 'correct' views" is concerned. You should understand that I don't own a dictaphone, and I certainly don't have a secretary. If there are any other meanings of the verb "dictate" that might apply to our practice of replying to letters with statements of our own perspectives, I wish you'd point them out to me. In general, only those who hold some sort of political, economic or social power (like the religious televangelist creeps) are able to "dictate" anything to any-

one. To accuse a truly powerless little paper like *Anarchy* of "dictating" anything can only be a monstrous distortion of the truth, i.e. a lie.

As far as "respect" for other people's views "regardless of their content" is concerned, I can truly say that I "respect" the views of Jesus freaks, "born-again" and their fundamentalist fascist cousins just about as much as I respect the views of Nazis, Leninists, and other practitioners of mass-murder and torture. That is to say, as little as possible.

If you truly believe that all views in this world deserve equal respect, no matter how heinous, how perverse, or how murderous, I would like to see you explain such a concept to a brutalized South African black, or a Central American peasant who's seen all of her family killed by American supplied and paid-for soldiers, or any of a thousand other examples of other people who have had their teeth kicked in by all the nice folks who hold the deadly beliefs that you would so cavalierly defend.

The concept of "right" is a legal fiction whose force only amounts to the belief people have in its existence, and the force of that belief in the face of the contrary interests of those who hold the real institutional power in society. If a right exists at all in practice it is only because those with power allow it to exist for now. Tomorrow the government might just as easily abolish any right it chooses to. And unless it happens to step on the toes of enough people who have enough countervailing collective power to cause it some trouble, you can kiss that right goodbye. So you are quite free to "recognize the right of others to practice their faiths" (as long as their faiths don't allow sarcastic criticism, I suppose), but that doesn't mean shit to any government, or any other authoritarian group, anywhere in the world. Most of the blacks of South Africa have learned that lesson by now. Many peasants in Central America have, too. It's about time that more of the privileged would-be radicals in the U.S. learned it also.

Anarchists, on the other hand, have been well aware of this lesson for generations. It's oh so nice of you to "wholeheartedly disagree with the readers who say anarchists should be shipped out of the country." But you weren't "offended" by this, I'm sorry to say, even though hundreds, if not thousands of anarchists have been deported from the U.S., and not so long ago either, by the same sort of self-righteous patriotic and religious zealots who have been disrespectfully criticized in these pages.

"True anarchy" as you call it, will not exist until all

libertarian views are met with respect of some sort, and all authoritarian views are greeted with derision and distaste. As long as people can exploit, enslave, dominate, and suppress others, the views and faiths which condone and support this are worthy of nothing but our contempt. If this contempt constitutes "intolerance" in your language so be it.

Lev Chernyi

Athens anarchists

Hello pals and happy (active) New Year,

We're an anarchist group in Athens and after we saw your address in *Maximum Rock'n'Roll* we decided to contact you to learn some things about your activity in Columbia. As soon as we have your answer we'll give you info about our movement in Greece, which counts about 5,000 comrades in Athens and many more in the other cities, with many magazines, bulletins, fanzines and more.

We enclose a weekly (not always) bulletin, *The Anarchist*, which contains news from Greece and elsewhere (Spain, Portugal, and U.K. and French revolts)....

Solidarity and Anarchy,
Y.K., Athens, Greece

Creative adjectives

Anarchy,

'Ello! I could think up a list of creative adjectives and adverbs to tell you folks how much I dig your paper... But then my request for a subscription speaks for itself! On second thought—the couple of issues I held in my sweaty palms were not only stimulating, thought provoking and informative, but more fun than a barrel of hyenas, I mean monkeys!... The "Playing for keeps" by Alf Sprack in issue #12 especially made me think...

I am right in the throes of adolescence (16--ugh) and feel that already I need to break the habit I've become. I see a lot of kids at school writing the @ everywhere—but when I approach them to talk I discover they aren't even interested in anarchism! It's just fashion, or something... I don't know if I understand anarchism completely; but what I do know makes sense... I learn about it more & more each day, through publications such as this one, old *Anarchus* journals from the 60's (WOWOW!), thinking & pondering on my own and reading... I also pass my dog-eared issue #12 on to friends, people who are interested and who are attempting to THINK and who care enough to try to change things (at least themselves), instead of thinking about their fucking prom...

In other words: I like *Anarchy*; a journal of Desire Armed...

I screwed up and got a money order for \$2.00 instead of \$3.00—so enclosed is \$1.00 in cash to add to it. (There is something unnatural about writing "Pay to the order of *Anarchy*, C.A.L." under the ugly heading of *Personal Money Order*—C. National Bank... But then \$ itself is unnatural... Yet obscenely necessary... LA, LA, LA, LA

(What?? You anarchists don't believe in God??? Aren't you afraid you'll go to Heck???)

Sincerely,
S.U., Champaign, IL.

Tremendously moved

Dear comrades & friends in struggle,

I had the delightful opportunity to share a copy of your publication, *Anarchy*; a journal of Desire Armed #12, a few nights ago, and I found it terrifically fascinating and informative. Thus, I am motivated at this time to request that I be considered for placement on your mailing list to receive future copies of your journal. I'd appreciate that much!!!

(Continued next page)

Towards a discussion of Columbia's alternative community

CONTINUED

if it does.) Similar struggles occurred (and occur still) at KOPN.

So, what can be done about this situation? One obvious step is to initiate an open, far-ranging discussion of our community within these pages. Despite the fact that most people have shown in the past that they don't want to discuss such things publicly, we believe that the only way forward is through an increase in communication, and an increase in our collective self-consciousness. And these things won't happen unless we work at them. It's simply not enough for us to continue to rely completely on the same old channels of informal griping and in-group gossip. The construction of a genuine community requires much more.

Beginning with the next issue of *Anarchy*, I'd like to start setting aside at least a page per issue for such a discussion. If there is more interest, more space will be set aside. Whereas, if no one responds to this invitation, you'll just get more griping from me in this space until you do. What are your thoughts on the local "alternative community?" What is it? Where is it headed? Where should it be headed? What's wrong and what's right with KOPN? the CCG? Catalpa Tree Cafe? the Columbia Anarchist League? the Committee Against Intervention? the Chautauqua Center? Mid-Missouri Nuclear Freeze? Shantytown Activists? Amnesty International? Families for Missouri Midwives? Columbia Medigroup?... What are our differences? What do we share? What prevents us from working and playing together more? Where do we go from here? —Lev Chernyi

AS WE SEE IT!

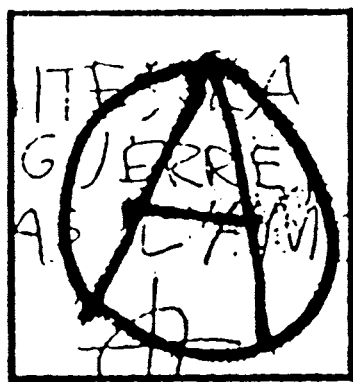
—columbia anarchist league

Common perspectives on ourselves, our world and social change. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for a free copy.



Address your request to: C.A.L., POB 380, Columbia, MO. 65205

Letters



Tremendously moved Continued

I am presently a political prisoner, illegally incarcerated in one of Alabama's more notorious slave-kolonies, continuously struggling to overcome my imprisonment and return to the society-at-large to live my life.

I am also recognized hereabouts and around the kountry as the present chairman of Inmates for Action, Atmore/Holman Collective; vice president of Just Us, a paralegal/inmate assistance group with chapters in other states now blossoming into life....

I was tremendously moved by the article by Alf Sprack, "Notes on playing for keeps." I found that although I relate to myself as a revolutionary, and advocate social change in ways that enhance and respect human rights, eradicate ignorance, mis-education, poverty, neo-slavery (prisons & jails), racism, sexism, and promote creative social transformation by whatever means available and/or necessary to secure that end, etc., etc., the ideas and issues were found much in common with mine. Anyway,

maybe another time I'll comment more extensively "how so!"

I must commend all of you for a beautiful journal; do keep on pushing forward always--Chimunenga!

In struggle (protracted),
S.C., Atmore, AL.

How are you?

C.A.L. (or whoever wrote me),
How are you? Me fine. I guess.

Well, where should I start? (ha!ha!) I got kicked out of this counseling place 2 weeks ago, because I poured my hairspray on the table and lit it. (Big fucken deal!) and I almost got put in the hospital for that! (Fucken lame, huh?) Cuz I was "told" I'm a very depressed child. Stressed out, and "their" afraid I'm gonna hurt myself, (not kill, "hurt" ha!ha!) and I'm very dangerous! Boy, don't let me in your house!! I'll make your house into a blow torch! (ha!ha!)

Only, if you could be with me now!!! Riding along the coast, with the fucken sun in my eyes (er!) & the big waves. WOWEE!!

I'm late for woke! (er!) work, I mean. Oh well.

Gosh!! Boy this letter is very interesting! I wanna listen to the Cure. But my recorder don't work! (that good) So I'm bummed!

(The god damn sun is in my fucken eyes!) er! er!

Then, a couple days before I got kicked out of that counseling place, I did Acid, and almost had a heart attack, and I was sinking on my bed, etc. Then I was drug-free for a week; then this guy got me stoned. Then I bought weed.

Then I smoked some today and it was so gross! Oh well!

I am so pissed! I took the wrong bus and I'm 2 hours late!! Oh well, it's time to go home now!! Shit! And now I have no transfer money either! Oh no! (These Mexicans have no money either!)

I finally listen to the Cure. Talk about Boredom!! These Mexicans don't talk English & oh....!!

What did my letter say? Its not like I don't want you to print it. But I don't wanna make a fool out of myself! (like I always do!)....

I think *Anarchy* fanzine is good. I guess. Well, I don't understand "anarchy" (Crass, either) so?

I like the letter section, does that count?? (Plus, all my zines are at my friends house cuz I had to hide all my letters if I went to the hospital).... Did I tell you about charging phone calls? I do it all the time. I thought I was gonna get caught. But that was like 2 months after? So?

Then this guy taught me how to do free mail...I don't know how he does it. But all my mail gets sent back...I guess you could get royal shafted by the federal government, or some shithead like that.

I might get in trouble! I sent some weed in this guy's letter...he'll probably shit when he finds it! ha!ha!

I met this black guy! He is so rich it's pitiful! He has a 911 Porsche and a Volvo and his own apartment! Mega everything. He drove me home. For some reason I could talk to him. I'm usually the kind of person who's shy. (Believe it or not!) So?

Well, I got to write this chick in New Jersey. I think she's mad at me! Oh!Oh!!

I stole me some earrings tonight. I thought they were crosses, but they were loops! I'll live, if my ears don't get infected!!

Well, I better go...

T., San Marcos, CA.

More greens

Hello Anarchy,

I thought I had read all of issue 12, but I just discovered at the end of the letters section something I wasn't expecting. I hope you get lots of mail, and reconsider continuing the printing of the programme of the Greens of West Germany. I thought the commentary was particularly good. No doubt the Greens provide a slot for those who feel the need to pull the lever for socio-ecological change, as well, probably, as an outlet for those who want to express their disaffection with the W. German elite and the major parties but who still believe voting can make a substantial difference. Well, anyway, I'd be interested in reading more.

Cheers,

M.C., Brooklyn, N.Y.

(Editor's note: One year after the preamble of the Federal Programme of the West German Greens was published (with commentary) by *Anarchy* this is only the third request we've received to continue publishing the remaining parts of the programme. Due to the obvious lack of interest, we no longer intend to publish more.)

Repulsive response

Lev,

The only *Anarchy*, a journal of Desire Armed that I've read is the Fall/Winter '86 issue (which someone gave me last night), so this response is a bit late, but I just wanted to let you know that I thought your response to F.S.'s "Charge my battery" letter was almost as repulsive as the "repent or die" religious tracts you attack on the previous page. In your own way you are as narrow-minded as the people you condemn. You deride the woman who complained about your sexist graphic for seeing things as black or white, & I completely agreed with your argument, yet you yourself seem to see religion as always evil, never good. I'm not religious myself & am not speaking specifically in defense of religion, but you of all people should know that you can't break things down into such simple terms. Have you been so sheltered or blind as to never have seen religious groups and people who don't attempt to convert, or push their philosophy down others' throats & insist that their way is the only right way? You notice the groups which are pushy & fundamental just as the media chooses to notice & give coverage to the punks who are destructive, senselessly violent, & usually stupid to boot. I'm sure you know some punks who don't make a career of burglarizing places, picking on some poor cops, doing drugs, & saying "Fuck" all the time. That's the stereotypical image, though, & stereotypes suck.

I know people, personal friends who believe in God & are religious in their own way, & go to churches which allow them to be religious in their own way. In my old house we lived fairly close to a community of Mennonites who were the epitome of "live & let live;" they lived as they thought best according to God's laws & didn't try to convert or put down people who were different. If you would look around, you would see that those who preach fire & brimstone don't make up the majority. And you act as though their interpretation of the Bible is the only one, when in actuality the Bible can be interpreted much more liberally than you would have us think. Half the scary "facts" that fundamentalists throw at non-believers are really only their interpretations of ambiguous statements & stories. And as most people know, the Bible contradicts itself

sometimes, so two people could have differing views and lifestyles & still be equally religious. Do you see what I'm saying? Personally, I don't think the Bible is such a magnificent work of literature & preaches such an appealing lifestyle that I would want to live by it. But you over-emphasize its rigidity & the alleged slave-like obedience it demands.

You remind me of my agnostic father in that when anyone mentions religion to him, he brings up the Crusades, the Inquisition, etc., etc. Well, I don't think it takes much of an IQ at all to see that these corrupt people were not living by the word of God, so why even use them as examples of Religion? They are examples of the very sins Christ was preaching against. And if that thought has never crossed your mind, then you sure don't think very far beyond your nice convenient argument. I hate it when I have to argue against anarchists, & people who are anti-religious, because I know they have a lot of worthwhile goals & original ideas, but narrow-mindedness in any form offends me.

Thanks for hearing me out. I know that you won't believe it but I'm not a religious person. Also, other than other certain aforementioned aspects, I was pretty impressed by your zine & enjoyed the hell out of it. Send me your next issue (money enclosed), & write back if you have the time.

Here's a quote from King Crimson I thought you might like:

You don't possess me,
don't impress me
Just upset my mind.
Can't instruct me
or conduct me
Just use up my time...

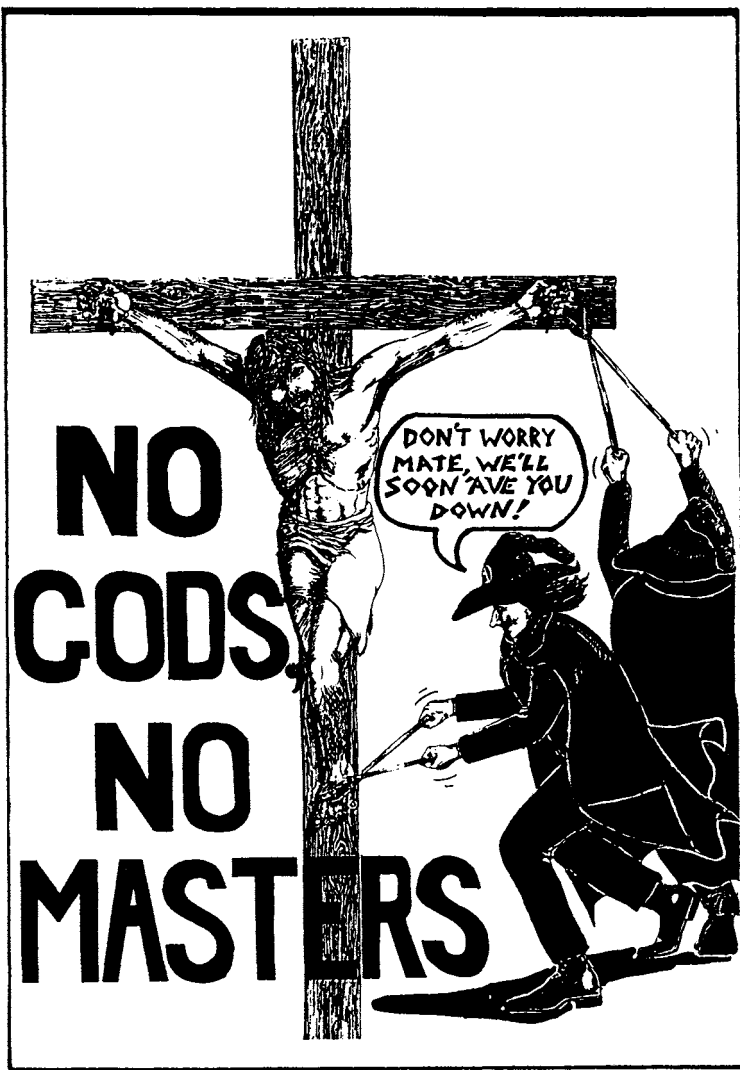
Peace,
Sincerely,
A., East Peoria, IL.

Lev replies

Thanks for writing. I enjoyed reading your letter, though I must disagree with several of your points.

First of all, my response to the "Charge my battery" letter was intentionally repulsive for two reasons. In the first place, the letter itself was so repugnant that I thought it deserved a thoroughly sarcastic reply. And secondly, I was tired of having to reply to the same old religious arguments (or rather lack thereof) and hoped to discourage any more of such dimwitted letters. You know what I mean, all they can say is "Believe in my brand of religion and all your problems will be solved." There's hardly a hint of any intelligence or personality involved. Just the dreadful repetition of the same old millennial lies. I've seen kumquats with higher IQ's.

You seem to think that I am "narrow-minded" because



BLACK FLAG, BM Hurricane, London WC1N 3XX



Letters

I criticize ALL religion, and not just the fundamentalist varieties (that you don't like), but I fail to see that there is all that much fundamental difference between them. In particular you compare my criticism of religion to the hysterical anti-semitism I criticized elsewhere in the last issue. But according to your logic, which confuses the context involved, I would be "narrow-minded" if, for instance, I was critical of ALL Nazis, and not just the hardcore ones! You are correct in seeing that some sort of range of beliefs is always involved. But it hardly follows that when one criticizes the whole range, it is automatically because of narrow-mindedness.

You are also ultimately right in maintaining that "you can't break things down into such simple terms." But once again, you confuse the context. All I was doing was answering a couple of particularly obnoxious letters. I was hardly engaged in writing a definitive essay on the subtleties of religion and atheism. Although, I assure you this topic will receive attention in an upcoming issue of the paper.

But to clarify my own critique of religion briefly here, I don't condemn all facets of all religions without regard for their details. What I consistently condemn is what I see as the essence of all religions—their metaphysical division of the world (which I view as a whole) into two arbitrary, yet absolute, spheres of the sacred and the profane (or good and evil, divine and mundane, etc.). Once an absolute judgement like this is made, it inevitably leads the way towards all the other abuses involved in the whole phenomenon of religion—authoritarianism, elitism, anti-rationalism, scapegoating, violence, suppression of the heathen and heretics, and self-repression. I don't just criticize fundamentalists because all religions share this whole syndrome of symptoms. Some may be less virulent than others, but they all share the same underlying pathology.

Even the Mennonites reproduce this syndrome, though their extreme minority status, and their relatively pacifistic views ameliorate some of the worst excesses of those religious groups more open to overt antagonism and violence. Instead they concentrate on reproducing a more "liberal" form of individual and community self-repression, along with the same old rigid forms of moralism and irrationalism. If they are the "exception," they sure do prove the rule!

Even more dubious than your confusions of context mentioned above, though, is your simple-minded defense of religion from its own history of excesses. When millions of witches and other pagans were massacred by Christians throughout Europe in the

name of God, it would appear ingenious to claim that religion wasn't involved. Were these people then atheists? With logic like this, every crime, genocide and infamy of history can easily be repudiated by all the relevant groups. Communists weren't REALLY responsible for Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, Mao's, etc. reigns of terror, torture and murder. The Nazis and fascists weren't such bad guys after all; it was just a few rotten apples who made them all look bad. And as for the ubiquitous practice of U.S. planned, controlled and paid-for butchery around the globe...obviously no "real Americans" could be involved. You're precisely right that it doesn't take "very much of an IQ" to ignore the facts of history. In fact, I would suspect that the lower the IQ the easier it is to conclude that 2+2=5 and that 1+1 could never in a million years equal 2.

And finally, I have a question for you. If these are such "nice convenient" arguments, then why is it so few people have the courage to make them? Do you think it could have anything to do with the near universal salvation to the words "God," "Spirit," "Religion," and "Morality" in the U.S. today?

Salute to ANARCHY

Friends,

I salute you on the excellent Fall/Winter Anarchy. Especially enjoyed Lev's "Bio-regional vision" review, which is part of a very important series, and the letters pages, with the no-punches-pulled replies.

Murray Bookchin's "Libertarian municipalism" plea for a local electoral politics, on the other hand, struck me as bankrupt and pathetic. He seeks to reverse the healthy, negative trend away from involvement in the whole racket of representation, using terms like "community" and "democracy" which historically have only served to valorize domination. His examples illustrate perfectly this point: Athenian "democracy" was the rule of a handful over all slaves, craftsmen and women; the New England

town meeting was merely window dressing for stark hierarchy.

Little wonder that his long-winded pitch ends up with a near-hysterical attack on those partisans of "self-righteous purity," "dogmatism," "rigidity," etc. who reject such political nonsense. I say, no thanks to being a model citizen. Fuck state authority at every level!

J.Z., Eugene, OR.

Voracious wolves

Dear Anarchy,

First of all, a big thanks for the three issues of Anarchy. Here's a check for six issues. Anyway, on this here subject, anarchism, I could write a verbose treatise. But I'll keep it short. In this semi-democratic republic (Amerikkka) people are free to starve, and free to bitch about it. There's a preoccupation to synchronize with the economic flow; in other words, to make money. Money is addictive. It's insatiable. It's so insatiable, it can result in crime. Wage slaves hunger for the profit motive. That's why the hippies became yuppies. Like voracious wolves. They saw the capitalist prey. Why tear down capitalism, when you can be a capitalist?

So with all this money-making preoccupation, who cares about politics? That is the sentiment of the American citizen. And the vehement sentiment of the refugees from commie countries. With this sentiment, the everyday north american can't see politics beyond the democratic, republican realm, The Russian boogiemer, and a smorgasboard of single issues. You know, prayer in school, abortion, handguns, animal rights, nukes, etc., etc. With this onslaught of single issues people are so overwhelmed they revert into their little shells, and say "fuck you, me first!" I need a fix! Give me money! I need it!

With the capitalists controlling the newspapers, TV, radio stations, plus the government controlling schools, no wonder nobody knows what anarchy is. Unless you're in a political science class, you

(Continued next page)

COMMENTS ON LIBERTARIAN MUNICIPALISM

Towards a discussion of anarchist strategies

Elsewhere on this page John Zerzan ("Salute to Anarchy") gives a short criticism of Murray Bookchin's essay, "Theses on libertarian municipalism," which was reprinted in the last issue of Anarchy. But, while John's critique is cogent and important, it seems to me to miss addressing a serious question which I intended to raise by publishing Bookchin's essay. And that question concerns what, if any, possible strategies are open to anarchists in our current situation.

Bookchin's strategy of libertarian municipalism, though it has some obvious problems (not the least of which concern precisely the points brought up by Zerzan), at least constitutes a genuine attempt to address the question of how we can attempt to move from here-and-now to a more anarchistic society. In many ways it resembles one of the more "successful" strategies pursued by anarchists in the relatively recent past (and to a much lesser extent in the present)—anarchosyndicalism. And as such it shares some of the same strengths and weaknesses possessed by anarcho-syndicalism.

Despite the inherent problems involved in such an institutional approach to anarchist activity, the idea of libertarian municipalism is somewhat attractive to me (minus the electoralism). At times it seems that it just might be possible to take this approach without compromising the essential integrity of an anarchist perspective, though the pressures to succumb to an overly reformist (and electoral) orientation would be severe (As witness, Murray Bookchin's current submersion in the quagmire of green politics and his unhappy reconciliation with the idiocy of Charlene Spretnak's green spiritualism).

Such a strategy could theoretically allow for the creation of an essentially anarchistic, but broader-based, movement, much like the anarcho-syndicalist synthesis did. It could even theoretically provide a possibility for anarchists to work with libertarian socialists, the more socially conscious of the "greens" and other semi-radical ecological activists, radical feminists, etc., in an essentially libertarian movement. Though chances are great the whole attempt would ultimately prove a fiasco.

The only real alternative to some form of libertarian municipalism, it seems to me, is the conscious choice of a basically insurrectionist approach. Anarchosyndicalism is ill-fitted to contemporary workplace realities in most of the U.S. The cooperative movement has for the most part always been a sell-out. And all the other possibilities that I can think of off hand have so compromised themselves that I can't take any of them seriously. At the same time, a purely insurrectionist approach seems sterile to me—in the sense that it may so refuse compromises with the real world that it loses all contact with it.

Nevertheless, my own approach has always been basically insurrectionist, although with a large dose of "pragmatism" or "realism" thrown in. Thus, I have participated at various times in anarchist education and communication projects (like this paper), cooperatives and collectives of various types, and even a rather miserable attempt at neighborhood self-organization. But these activities have always been based upon the assumption that they are not just ends in themselves. But rather that their primary importance

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more than just ludicrous

February 9, 1987
Oregon Daily Emerald

Nevada

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The task of organizing the demonstration fell to blue-shirted "peacekeepers," who had been trained to keep the entire event non-violent and to register those planning "CD," civil disobedience. Equipped with walkie-talkies, they ironically mirrored the Nye County deputies on the other side of the cattle guard. The police even placed a board over the cattle guard for the protesters' convenience.

It lasted two hours. In a form of assembly line mass arrest, the people stepped up to the boundary, were warned of arrest if they crossed it, and were fitted with a pair of disposable plastic handcuffs.

It is more obvious every day that only those who have no interest in transforming this desolate society continue to perform the absurd little "civil disobedience" gestures of the "peace movement."

Over and over and over their pious rituals are enacted for the media, mimicking in miniature the same refusal to confront a miserable social structure and culture that Ghandi embodied.

Every part of this world cries out to be challenged and overcome, down to its roots. Civilization, in its possibly terminal crisis, must be re-appraised; its very technology threatens global extinction while rendering our lives empty, routinized and neurotic.

Devoid of real critique, respectful of authority, as tedious as our commodified, wage-slavery confinement, the "peace" charades are truly a bad joke at all levels.

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Voracious wolves

Continued

think anarchy means no line in the middle of the street. So what's the answer? To penetrate the obscurantist for? Teach-ins? United front for the anti-statist movement? Armed struggle? Demonstrations? I just don't know? Anarchism now, especially yankee, is just a gamut of transitory bi-monthly rags. White, middle-class collegiate intellectualism. And indolent slob who think too much. You get ten anarchists in a room. You get 20 different versions of anarchism, with neat little tags. Like for example, anarcho-communism, anarcho-capitalism (libertarianism), anarcho-new-age-feminist-stigmatism, on and on. What's an unaware novice supposed to think?

What is anarchy? What's not? What about the working class in this agenda of utopia? You think a Bruce Springsteen proletariat can comprehend the small print of an *Open Road* or *Overthrow* [editor's note: an anarchist and a yuppie publication, respectively]. Attention span of a commoner can't handle a 2,000 word essay about the Congo war of liberation. I know cuz I tried to read Pierre-Joseph Proudhon. Couldn't keep my eyes open.

Has anarchism become an esoteric joke? I'm not laughing. But what the hell, thanks for listening.

Another anarchist against anarchy.

Stephen Jay Morris,
Los Angeles, CA.
(You can use my name, the FBI knows me.)

Towards a discussion of anarchist strategies

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lies in preparing the ground for more conscious, more direct, and more explicitly anarchistic activities as our social reality lurches along toward the inevitable breaks in its fabric large enough to allow small-scale insurrectionary activity to occur--wildcat strikes, riots, spontaneous demonstrations, collective non-compliance and refusal, occupations, etc. And, of course, once small-scale insurrection becomes possible, wider horizons are opened up for the potential construction of genuine forms of popular, directly democratic and antiauthoritarian power.

Still, I'm not entirely happy with this formulation. And I'd like to see the whole topic of strategy given some discussion by other anarchists who may be able to provide some greater insights into our contemporary possibilities. Anyone else have some new and exciting ideas on this old, but fundamental, topic? -Lev Chernyi

Christian censorship

To the editor,

I couldn't get the *Maneater* to print this letter. I would appreciate it if you would. It presents an opposing view to many of the letters that recently appeared in the *Maneater* circa March 12, 1987.
B.C., Columbia, MO.

(Editor's note: The *Maneater* is a local, conservative student newspaper published for University of Missouri students.)

To the editor,

David Palm's statement that

Christianity is "not just a philosophy" shows that he doesn't know as much about Christianity as he thinks he knows, and nothing at all about philosophy.

Philosophy is a methodology for finding answers that uses logical arguments and analysis, neither of which have even the remotest connection to the thing called Christianity. Christianity is completely illogical.

Furthermore, the fact that the fundamental commandments of Jesus have no accompanying arguments or explanations indicates that they have no connection to God. After all,

when parents teach a child good behavior, if they expect compliance as well as psychological growth, they won't just order the child around. They will explain why he or she should do certain things. This will help the child understand and lead to better acceptance of the rules.

Do Christians really believe that God is dumb enough to just order people about with no explanation of the rules? It's an idiotic notion. It would make more sense to believe that Satan wrote the Bible.

When one considers the bloody, violent history of Christianity that idea seems to make even more sense. Satan may be laughing his head off at the foolish and assinine antics of gullible Christians who he was able to deceive and manipulate like puppets on a string by simply writing a book.

Talk about your mini-series: the Crusades, the Spanish Inquisition, the virtual extermination of the friendly Arawak Indians by the Spanish led by that "heroic" Christian named Columbus, the violence in Northern Ireland and the apartheid in South Africa are just a small sample of the entertainment that Christians have provided Satan over the years.

It's time to relegate Christianity to the dustbin of history.

Bob Cuningdale





The Yellow Machine Angel of Exquisite Debris

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